

**THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED  
GAUTENG CLASSROOMS**

by

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## DECLARATION

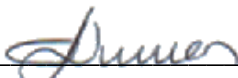
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### **THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED GAUTENG CLASSROOMS**

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

  
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## SUMMARY

This study investigated how educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. The intention of the study was to explore various challenges that teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom; determine different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms; establish if inclusive education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng and to determine if the needs of learners are truly met in these public school classrooms. It was a qualitative study. Teachers teaching in the Foundation Phase were interviewed and they also participated in focus group discussions. This study revealed that educational policies and law do affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. Inclusive education can only be successful if teachers have an extensive understanding of how to identify barriers to learning, obtain skills to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms and plan for diversity with confidence.

**KEY TERMS:** Inclusive education; Overcrowded classrooms; Individual support plan; Curriculum differentiation; School based support team; District based support team; Implement inclusion policies; Needs of learners; Outcomes based education; Inclusive policies and procedures.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CUMSA	Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa
DBST	District based support team
DoE	Department of Education
HoD	Head of Department
INDS	Integrated National Disability Strategy
ISP	Individual support plan
OBE	Outcomes based education
NAPTOSA	The National Professional Teachers' Association of South Africa
NCESS	National Committee on Education Support Services
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NCSNET	National Commission on Special Educational Needs and Training
NEPA	The National Education Policy Act
SAFCERT	South African Certification Council
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBST	School based support team
SIAS	Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
UNISA	University of South Africa

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## CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The Department of Education (DoE) issued a framework policy document in 2001 called 'The White Paper 6' (RSA 2001). This framework policy is an official government document that focuses on providing inclusive education to all learners with barriers to learning. Education White Paper 6 (RSA 2001:17) defines inclusion as "*recognizing and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities*" and "*supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met...*". In this document, the District Based Support Team (DBST) introduced interventions in order to assist educators in mainstream schools to manage the diversity of learning and teaching needs.

The White Paper 6 (RSA 2001:17) furthermore placed emphasis on the following: "*Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning factors, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners*". In order for this to work, teachers need to be developed on how to successfully implement effective teaching strategies, specifically in overcrowded classrooms as is the case in South Africa and other developing countries.

In an attempt to strengthen the implementation of inclusive education, the Minister of Education approved the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) on 19 December 2014 (RSA 2014). The SIAS policy provides a framework for the standardisation of the procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in school. This policy, however, can only be successfully implemented if all role-players do their part. The respective levels of authority of role-players within the SIAS system include:

- **Teachers** Teachers are responsible for early identification of barriers to learning and must provide classroom-based interventions to address the learners' barriers to learning. It is, therefore, the teachers' role to identify the learners' barriers to learning and provide support in the classroom, according to the needs of each child to overcome these learning barriers.

- **The School Based Support Team (SBST)** The SBST will review the interventions provided by the teacher and assist teachers with additional support strategies for learners who experience barriers to learning to strengthen the Individual Support Plan (ISP). The SBST will get involved after the class teacher has tried various teaching strategies and support programmes to overcome a particular learner's learning barriers, and none of the interventions were successful. An ISP will be compiled with additional support strategies. If the ISP is still unsuccessful, the SBST will seek assistance from the District Based Support Team.
- **The District Based Support Team (DBST)** The DBST will respond to the request for additional support from the SBST by providing additional strategies and support plans. The DBST will authorise the placement into a specialised setting if all interventions were unsuccessful. The placement is often at specialised schools where the learner will receive additional specialised support at the school.

Despite the good intentions of inclusive policies, the challenges of overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources and limited teacher training on inclusive education lead to implementation challenges such as high teacher-learner ratio, language barriers, behaviour problems in the classroom and lack of time to support learners individually. In the large classes today, the concern of providing individual support to learners becomes unrealistic.

Educators are not professionally trained to deal with most of the barriers that learners experience, yet teachers are expected to provide individual support on a daily basis. The number of learners who need individual support is also increasing drastically, due to the increase of the learner-teacher ratio every year. The overcrowded classrooms and lack of parental involvement lead to behaviour concerns which in turn hampers the learning of not only the disruptive learner, but the entire class. According to DiGiulio (2005:5) a chaotic classroom distracts the learners, prevents them from attending, focusing and concentrating, wastes time and hinders them from achieving their educational potential. Learners will feel more secure and perform better if their parents are involved in their schooling. Dowling and Osbourne (1985:164) support this view by stating that, if children with behavioural problems see that their parents and educators are collaborating to manage difficulties, they experience more consistency and feel more contained.

Classrooms are so large that even the basic requirements are not always met, such as doing one-to-one reading with 40-50 learners in one class. This is one task that becomes very challenging, even to experienced teachers. Another requirement that is hard to meet is that all learners need to learn according to their own pace and according to their own cognitive ability. In a large classroom situation, it is impractical based on the overwhelming curriculum requirements that must be met every term. Overcrowded classrooms are often characterised by poor academic performance, poor interaction, poor class control and poor participation from learners. Ellis, Limjoco & Johnson (2011) state in an article that *“when you have a class size that’s even 40, it’s too large, you can never really get to teach students and find out their needs and weaknesses”*.

The inclusion policy requires various levels of activities for one lesson: the weak learners must have a worksheet different to most of the other learners, but the gifted learners must also be challenged with additional questions. Teaching at different levels is the challenge, as the curriculum timeframe does not adapt to accommodate the teaching time it will take for one lesson to be done to cater for all the cognitive levels in one classroom.

## **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

The inspiration for researching educational law and policies came from my own personal experience as a dedicated teacher and as Head of Department (HoD). I am also responsible for promoting equality as School Assessment Team coordinator of my school. All assessment tasks must be quality assured to adhere to our high standards of teaching and learning. It is my role to ensure that educators set assessment tasks that are age appropriate to the learners, and they must cater for different cognitive levels.

I explored how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning in South Africa as a whole. I wanted to better understand educational policies in order to ensure quality education is being delivered. By studying educational law, I will be better equipped to provide guidance to my team of educators.

I am interested in educational law and the rights of both learners and educators in order to ensure successful implementation of educational policies to uphold the quality education learners deserve. As an educator I am faced with the challenges of inclusive education daily. It

was introduced to provide equal learning opportunities to all learners. Educators are, however, not trained to handle various barriers to learning in overcrowded classrooms.

I greatly benefited from studying educational policies and law. This also allowed me the opportunity to educate my peers about their rights as educators and ways forward to ensuring policy implementations are managed successfully. I chair many phase meetings as HoD and in turn I get asked many questions on how to handle various classroom situations, including how to implement inclusive education successfully.

Teaching is my passion. I want to better myself in order to provide my learners with a great education. I want to share my knowledge with my colleagues to make teaching fun and meaningful for both the teachers and the learners. I have learned new teaching strategies to master a classroom in the 21st century by providing equal education.

The main purpose remains that quality education needs to be provided via educational policies and governed legislation. This all sounds very good on paper, but to implement this in a classroom that is overcrowded is an enormous challenge for educators in Gauteng and around the county. The overcrowded classrooms lead to discipline concerns. It is not always possible for one educator to provide individual support to learners due to the large number of learners in one class. Learners' lack of self-discipline and the fact that they do not take pride in their work also hampers the learning process. How does an educator support or help a child who does not want to be helped? Learners often laugh at any teacher trying to go the extra mile to support them.

Minimal parental involvement is a major contribution to educators' struggles in the classrooms. Parents need to work long hours to keep food on the table, and often the household is run by elder siblings. These learners do not get support from home; they might be supported at school academically, but it is love they crave. According to Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004), one of the challenges that hampers effective parental involvement is low income, parents need to work more and do not spend enough time at home helping their children with their school work.

According to Swart and Pettipher (2005) inclusion is about all learners and not only about disability, but mainly about ways and means of responding to all learners' varying individual



needs. Educators must have brainstorming sessions to come up with solutions on how to provide quality education in a time when they are faced with severe discipline problems. The policies that must be enforced should be teacher friendly.

I am fascinated by the national education policy that promotes standardisation throughout the country's public-school system. But the question remains: Are inclusive education policies realistic with overcrowded classrooms in public school? With my research I explored how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning. Swart and Pettipher (2005) view inclusion as the development of an inclusive community and inclusive education systems. They highlight the fact that it is about including all learners, regardless of ability, gender, language or disability, so that all learners can have access to the education.

### **1. 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **1.3.1 Research questions**

The section above leads now to the main problem statement of the study that can be phrased as a research question, namely: How do educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms? This main research question was divided into a few sub-questions that assisted in guiding the study:

- What challenges are teachers facing to implement inclusion policies in Gauteng classroom?
- How do teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?
- Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school?
- Are the needs of learners truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?

#### **1.3.2 Aims and objectives of the study**

The purpose of the study was to highlight real struggles learners and teachers experience every day. The main aim of this study was to determine how educational policies and law could affect

the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. The following objectives were derived from this aim, namely to:

- explore various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom;
- identify different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school;
- establish if inclusive education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a Gauteng public school; and
- establish if the needs of learners are truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng.

#### **1.4 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

Fink defines a literature review as *"a systematic, explicit and reproducible method of identifying, evaluating and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners"* (Fink, 2005:3).

Education in South Africa is governed by various policies and legislation. One of the most important policies is the White Paper on Education of 1995 (RSA 1995). This was one of the first steps after democratisation to develop a new education system. The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) of 1996 (RSA 1996) has the following objectives for the Act. The objectives of the Act are to provide for the:

- determination of national education policy by the Minister in accordance with certain principles;
- consultations to be undertaken prior to the determination of policy and the establishment of certain bodies for the purpose of consultation;
- publication and implementation of national education policy; and
- monitoring and evaluation of education.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (RSA 1996) states that all learners have access to quality education without discrimination and makes schooling compulsory for children aged 7 to 15. I wanted to find out if the needs of learners are truly met in overcrowded classrooms in

a public school in Gauteng. I wanted to explore various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom and share ideas of successful implementation strategies.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1 The research design**

According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2005), research methodology refers to the coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the '*goodness of fit*' to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose. In contrast to this, Kothari (2004) views the research design as the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. The research study focused on group design, as it is flexible and produces rich data in the form qualitative feedback. The feedback gained allows for deeper understanding of other problems that may exist in a school environment that would impact the design.

### **1.5.2 The research approach**

The approach chosen for this study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is largely exploratory research. The focus was on gathering data through open-ended and conversational communication to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of participants. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:479) defined qualitative research as "*primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories.*" This suggests that data and meaning arise organically from the research framework.

I decided to use this approach as it is generally used for understanding the views and perceptions of participants. This approach involved interaction with participants more than in a structured survey, as it used dynamic processes such as interviews and group discussions. It also allowed opportunities to engage with participants in projective techniques.

This study aimed to recognise, understand and interpret educators' views and experiences regarding the challenges of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng and

how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning. It was therefore important to gather the views and perceptions of participants with regard to these issues. I believe this was achieved via a qualitative research approach. The research study gathered qualitative data to assess the personal experiences of educators while also gathering data from survey instruments to measure the quality of inclusive education, thereby including quantitative data.

### **1.5.3 Population and sampling**

Polit and Hungler (1999) refer to the population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. The population for this study included all special needs learners in overcrowded schools in the region of research. The region was the Gauteng region due to accessibility for the researcher.

MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) describe a sample as a group of individuals from whom data is collected often representative of a specific population. A sample therefore represents a portion of the total population. A sampling method was used to obtain a sample. In this study, purposive sampling was used as a sampling method. Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). This involved identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). With purposive sample, the researcher was most likely to get the opinions of the target population. This involved identifying and selecting individuals who are knowledgeable and have relevant experience about the phenomenon of interest. Purposive sampling provided options and made generalisations possible from the information obtained.

This method of sampling was chosen as teachers with overcrowded classrooms were selected for this sample. These participants were selected based on the purpose of my research. The purpose of the study was to highlight real struggles that learners and teachers experience every day in overcrowded classrooms.

The sample was used as participants in the study for the purpose of finding out how educators provide inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng and to understand how

educational policies and law affect teaching and learning. It provided insight into how educators have implemented curriculum differentiation to cater for the immense needs of learners.

The sample for this study consisted of four teachers (n=4). I used four teachers, one per grade, as participants for the study because we have four grades in Foundation Phase, namely: Grade R, Grade One, Grade Two and Grade Three. I chose classes with the highest number of learners per grade to be observed and interviewed. By using teachers with the highest number of learners allowed the researcher to gain in-depth information on their experiences and skills, since the number of learners in the classrooms was high.

Document analysis was also used as research instrument. Analysing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to how focus group or interview transcripts are analysed (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis is regularly used because of the various ways it can support and strengthen research.

#### **1.5.4 Data generation methods and data collection techniques**

Semi-structures interviews were used as research instruments for the study. The interviews included a number of planned questions, but the question order may have differed depending on the answers that were given in previous questions. The interviews were done individually, and the main focus of them was for participants to offer a complete description and analysis of the research subject. During the interviews, data was collected using audio recordings and written notes. The interviews did not take place during contact time, but still during school hours. The data collection methods of this study were therefore comprised of semi-structured individual interviews to gain an understanding of educators' challenges of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng.

Group discussion is sometimes seen as synonymous with interviews, especially the semi-structured one-to-one and group interviews (Parker & Tritter, 2006). Focus group discussion consists of four major steps: research design, data collection, analysis and reporting of results (Morgan et al, 1998). The group discussion data collection technique was used for understanding the teaching methods of the participants, various ways that the school implemented curriculum differentiation, expectations of the Department of Education regarding

inclusive education, challenges of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in public schools and how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning.

The group discussion was a small group of four participants and in conversational form. The discussions were well planned by developing key questions based on the main objective of the research study and were recorded by using an audio recorder and by taking notes. An interview schedule was used with open-ended questions. A group interview is a form of conversation research. A group interview refers to a type of interview where a number of participants are interviewed together. The researcher asks a small group of participants consisting of four educators, for open-ended responses conveying their views. The focus group interview is a very valuable research tool, as it can capture information that will help the researcher convey the division of the study topic better. The research method was therefore a focus group interview.

A questionnaire was used to gather information from the participants, i.e. the four educators. The questions were logically set from easy to difficult and use was made of an interview schedule. The questions were done as an in-house survey and the focus remained on the objectives of the research study, and the questionnaire allowed for individuals to provide their views of the challenges within the education system and provided suggestions on how to solve some of the challenges.

Document analysis was used as a research instrument. The rationale behind this was to better understand inclusion policies and regulations. Document analysis can also point to questions that need to be asked or situations that need to be observed. Making use of document analysis is also a way to ensure that your research is critical and comprehensive (Bowen, 2009).

#### **1.5.5 Data analysis, interpretation and presentation**

It is important to point out that there are different types of data analysis processes and the level of detail of the transcript will depend on the type of analysis being done (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). After data had been collected, the collected information was organised and analysed to draw conclusions. The interviews and group discussion recordings were converted into text and grouped into categories and themes according to the sub-objectives of the study in order to make successful section connections.

I transcribed the recordings myself by listening to them and typing the conversation content onto a Word document. To check for accuracy, I listened to the recordings while I read the transcripts once they were completed.

For this research study, data is presented as quotes from participants. Braun and Clarke (2006:79) mention that there are six phases of thematic analysis which include:

- Familiarisation with the data: This is transcribing the data, reading and re-reading the data and noting initial ideas.
- Coding: This refers to searching for interesting patterns or features across the entire data set.
- Searching for themes: Collating codes into potential themes and gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
- Reviewing themes: Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set.
- Defining and naming the themes: Clear definitions and names for each theme.
- Writing up: Producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

The six steps prescribed above are guidelines and should be used in relation to the research question and the available data. These guidelines lay out the process for producing a good thematic analysis that is detailed, plausible and refined.

## **1.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY**

According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), the trustworthiness of a qualitative research project can be judged by adhering to standards and ethical practice. Information should be gathered over time and shared with participants.

The first element of trustworthiness that I focused on here is credibility. Trustworthiness can be described as the believability of a researcher's findings, by looking at what the researcher has done to make the results credible. Credibility is the how confident the researcher is in the truth of the research findings. The researchers can use triangulation to show the research study's findings are credible.

Secondly, transferability was used in this study to attempt to answer the research question. This research study adhered to the standard of trustworthiness by keeping records, recordings and signed consent forms to maintain confidentiality. Transferability is also a way for the researcher to demonstrate that the study's findings are applicable to other contexts by showing similarities to other studies. According to Shenton (2004) transferability is the extent to which the findings from one study can be applied to another.

Thirdly, meeting of the dependability criterion is difficult, but, as a researcher, I strived to enable a future researcher to repeat the study. I made sure that my research study had enough information from my research report that if a person wanted to replicate my study, they would obtain similar findings.

Finally, to achieve confirmability the researcher took steps to demonstrate that findings emerge from the data and not their own predispositions. This means that the findings are based on participants' responses and not personal motivations of the researcher. To achieve confirmability, the researcher provided an audit trail, which highlighted every step of data analysis that was made in order to provide a rationale for the decisions made.

## **1.7 RESEARCH ETHICS/ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In this study I firstly adhered to the ethical rules prescribed by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and I applied for ethics approval from the College of Education Ethics Committee at the University of South Africa for clearance.

Secondly, I requested permission from the Gauteng Department of Education. The permission granted allowed me to conduct research at the school of choice within the Gauteng East District.

Thirdly, I requested permission from the school principal and School Governing Body to conduct research. The school provided permission in writing.

Lastly, I handed out formal invitations to the participants for the semi-structured interviews. The invitation outlined the interview process and had an attached consent form for participants to allow for the interview to take place, and to ensure the participants that the information would be confidential.



## **1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

A potential weakness for the study was document analysis gathered from the selected school as the school might not make the documentation available and this might place restrictions on the research methodology and conclusions. Time could also be a limitation that could hinder the progress of the study.

Participants might not have enough time to respond to all the questions due to rigid timetables, so arrangements were done in advance with the participants to establish the best time to conduct the interviews.

Participants' unexpected behaviour or responses during the interviews could also hamper the outcome of the study. If a participant, for example, did not speak loud enough to be heard properly, it would be difficult to decode the content of the interview.

Despite the limitations mentioned above, the research findings contributed to a better understanding of the challenges of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms and provided insight into how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning.

## **1.9 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Delimitations of the study included the choice of objectives and research questions. The questions were formulated to address the challenges of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms.

The choice of the objectives was to gain insight into how the educational policies and law affects teaching and learning. The research study focused on one school and included teachers in the Foundation Phase (Grade R-3). Although all educators are facing challenges with inclusive education, time limits restricted a larger population to be researched.

## **1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

### **1.10.1 Inclusive education**

According to UNESCO, inclusive education is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion from education and from within education.

According to Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow's views on inclusive education, inclusive education seeks to increase access, presence, participation and success for all students in education (Booth & Ainscow, 2016).

This is education that includes everyone by ensuring access to quality education for all learners by meeting their diverse needs. It is providing opportunities for learners with disabilities to learn in general education classrooms.

### **1.10.2 Overcrowded classroom**

Carlson (2000) stated that quality learning was not possible when large number of students were packed into small classrooms. Shah and Inamullah (2012) found from their studies that over-crowded classes could have a direct impact on students' learning.

Overcrowded classrooms do not only affect learners' performance, but the teachers are also facing different problems such as discipline concerns, stress and poor health. A classroom in which the number of learners exceeds the optimum level such that it causes hindrance to the teaching-learning process does not create an environment conducive to learning.

## **1.11 PLANNING OF THE STUDY/CHAPTER OUTLINE**

**Chapter one** introduces the research study, highlighting the issues generated by the study and explaining the problem statement. The aims and objectives of the study, the research methodology used, and explaining of the key concepts used in the study are also include in this chapter.

**Chapter two** is the literature review chapter and focuses on getting insight into inclusive education policies and other related policies that ensure learners receive education according to their individual needs. This chapter also explores the challenges educators experience to enforce inclusion in overcrowded classrooms.

**Chapter three** explains the research approach and research methods used in the study. Creditability and trustworthiness are also explained.

**Chapter four** focuses on the presentation, analysis and discussion of the obtained data. Sampling and data analysis are interpreted to gain an understanding of educators' and learners'

challenges regarding inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms by selecting educators who teach different grades to participate in the interview process. The interviews helped me to analyse the data.

**Chapter five** presents the summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion based on the data analysis of this research.

## **1.12 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided an introduction and background to the study and also explained the rationale for the study. The research questions and aims and objectives of the study were highlighted. The research methodology was discussed, followed by the trustworthiness of the study, the research ethics/ethical considerations, limitations and delimitations of the study and the key concepts of inclusive education and overcrowded classrooms were explained. Lastly, the planning of the study or chapter outline was introduced.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter identified the research problem and the aims and objectives of the study. This chapter is the literature review that focuses on getting insight into inclusive education policies and other related policies that ensure learners receive education according to their individual needs. This chapter also explores the challenges educators experience when implementing inclusion in a multicultural and overcrowded public school classroom. A literature review should be an examination of previous research related to the topic in question, which then gives the theoretical underpinnings of the study (Johnson & Christensen 2008; Suter 2012).

According to educational psychologist John Creswell, the literature review does several things: (1) *"It shares with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported"*; (2) *"It relates a study to the larger ongoing dialogue in the literature about a topic, filling in gaps and extending prior studies"*; and (3) *"It provides a framework for establishing the importance of your study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings"* (2003:29-30). This chapter will focus on inclusive education policies in South Africa and the impact they have on educators in the classroom. Inclusive education is a system of education that is responsive to the diverse needs of learners. It means that all students in a school, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, become part of the school community (Nutbrown & Clough 2006).

### **2.2 HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

In order to understand the true meaning of inclusive education and the implementation of educational policies, the researcher studied the history of the education system in South Africa during apartheid. Apartheid education in South Africa promoted race and ethnic divisions and put emphasis on differences with regard to all aspects of education, where white schools received better quality of education, including better teacher training and teaching materials. Curriculum development and education policy in apartheid South Africa was used as an ideological state apparatus, where methods other than physical violence were used to achieve the same goals to support the interests of the ruling apartheid government.

In 1963 an advisory board for Bantu Education was established (Jones 1970). In 1996 the Ministry of Education introduced a new curriculum called Outcomes Based Education (OBE) with the intention of addressing the differences related to apartheid education. OBE became an important factor of education policy in South Africa as it was the beginning of the transformation of the of education system. The National Education Policy Act was legislated in 1967 (Kruger 1986). For the first time the central government laid down a comprehensive education policy to be followed in all four provinces (Venter & Verster 1986). Act 41 of 1967 ended the divided control over education by the provincial authorities (Kruger 1986).

In 1969 The National Education Policy Amendment Act (No. 73 of 1969) was passed (Venter & Verster 1986). On 12 November 1971 the Minister of National Education announced a new general policy regarding differentiated education, which came into effect nationwide in 1973 (Kruger 1986). The South African Certification Council Act (85 of 1986) was passed. The object of the South African Certification Council (SAFCERT) was *“to ensure that the certificates issued by the Council at a point of withdrawal represent the same standard of education and examination”* (King & van den Berg 1992:13).

In 1990 The South African government considered opening white schools to black students if 90 percent of white parents voted in favour of admitting blacks (*The Star* 4 July 1990 in Hlatshwayo 2000). The National Professional Teachers' Association of South Africa (NAPTOSA) was formed in 1991. It was a national body comprising of 14 teacher associations representative of all Afrikaans, English-speaking and African teachers (Mothata 1998). The Department of National Education issued a Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa (CUMSA), which tabled language policy options from which parents could choose. This was implemented in 1993. The options did not challenge the dominance of English and Afrikaans or address the African language issue (Sedibe 1998).

The above dates are just an overview of the challenges the education system was facing during the apartheid era. A shift from a contents based apartheid education system to an inclusive outcomes based system had to include major changes with regard to philosophy, structures and practices. The paradigm shifts from apartheid education to an inclusive OBE system demanded a shift from functionalism to radical structuralism.

## **2.3 CURRENT EDUCATION POLICIES AND LEGISLATION**

Engelbrecht and Green (2007) stated that the term “inclusive education” is about changing and transforming the education system to accommodate all children, regardless of the strength or weakness in any area and have them become part of the school community. South Africa has implemented an inclusive education policy in order to address barriers to learning in the education system. Nevertheless, the implementation of this policy is hindered by the lack of teachers’ skills and knowledge in differentiating the curriculum to address a wide range of learning needs in the classroom. In this section, the researcher explores current education policies, educational law and the effect they have on inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng.

### **2.3.1 South African Constitution of 1996**

Parliament approved the Constitution in 1996. The Constitution contains important rules of our political system. It protects the rights of the people inside the country, and it explains their obligations. In addition, it defines the institutions of South Africa, what their powers are, and how these powers must be put to use. The launch of inclusive education for learners can be traced back to the nation’s founding document, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996 (RSA 1996). In Section 29 of the Bill of Rights it is stated that everyone has the right to a basic education, including basic adult education, and to further education, which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible. It further states that, in order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account equity, practicability and the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.

The Constitution of South Africa (RSA 1996) contains the Bill of Rights, which emphasises the importance of democracy. Human rights and social justice for all learners are emphasised, as well as the optimum participation and social integration of all learners (Nel, Lazarus and Daniels, 2010). The main objective is to promote the achievement of equality and legislative and other measures were designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.

### **2.3.2 Education White Paper 6**

The framework for an inclusive education system is set out in Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE 2001). The White Paper summaries how the education and training system must transform itself to contribute to establishing a caring and humane society, how it must change to accommodate the full range of learning needs and the mechanisms that should be put in place. The White Paper maintains that inclusion is based on the principle that learning disabilities arise from the education system rather than the learner.

The White Paper on inclusive education and training is about acknowledging that all children can learn and that all children need support. The Paper refers to inclusive education as changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, the curriculum and the environment to meet the needs of all learners.

The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (INDS) emphasises the need to develop a holistic educational model, based on the principle of human rights. It promotes the recognition and acceptance of people with disabilities as equal members of their communities. Furthermore, it argues that people with disabilities are as entitled to all facets and benefits of society as are the rest of society (DoE 1997). Therefore, it was suggested that it might not be in the best interest of communities to separate those with disabilities (Engelbrecht and Green 2007).

### **2.3.3 South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996)**

Section 5 of the South African Schools Act (SASA) states that public schools must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way. In determining the placement of a learner with special education needs, the relevant Head of Department and Principal must also consider the rights and wishes of the parents, and of the learner him/herself, and uphold the principle of the best interest of the child in any decision-making. Section 5 also sets out how the State must provide for the educational needs of disabled persons (DoE 1996).

### **2.3.4 National Commission on Special Educational Needs and Training (NCSNET) and National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS)**

Together with SASA, the NCSNET and NCESS Report in 1997 played a major role in placing education practices on a more inclusive footing. The NCSNET and the NCESS were commissions appointed by the late Professor Kader Asmal to investigate the provision of education for learners with special needs in South Africa. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2010) state that the Report's emphasis is on the responsiveness of the education system to diversity and the integration of the two systems of education that had been historically separated, namely special and regular schools.

After this Report, as mentioned by Nel et al. (2013), EWP6 was accepted in 2001 as the legal policy to build an inclusive education and training system. Nel et al. further mention that both the NCSNET and NCESS report and the EWP6 were grounded in the Constitution of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996b), which guarantees human rights, and the South African Schools Act (RSA 1996a). The NCSNET and the NCESS were appointed by the Minister and Department of Education to examine and make recommendations on all aspects of special needs and support services in education to ensure that the system becomes more alert to the diverse needs of all learners. The NCSNET/NCESS has purposefully implemented a complete approach, where they have considered all aspects of education. This approach is grounded on the certainty that the core task facing education is one of identifying and addressing the different and diverse needs of learners and reducing barriers to learning and development, thereby promoting effective learning among all learners in South Africa.

### **2.3.5 The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)**

According to Coetzee (2012), the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is not a new curriculum, but an amendment to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Grades R-12), so that the curriculum would become more accessible to teachers. Every subject in each grade would have a single, comprehensive and concise Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), which would provide details on what content teachers ought to teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis. There would be clearly delineated topics for each subject and a recommendation on the number and type of assessments per term.



Outcomes and assessment standards are now called topics and themes, while learning areas are now called subjects (Coetzee, 2012). For Geldenhuys and Wevers (2013), the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement provides guidelines to schools in terms of curriculum content and assessment requirements. However, the CAPS is structured in such a way that it does not support the requirements of the EWP6, which promotes curriculum and assessment differentiation.

## **2.4 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

The Department of Basic Education set forth its strategy for implementing the inclusive model into the South African education system through two sets of guidelines, the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) and the Guidelines for Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom through the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

### **2.4.1 National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)**

When Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education, building an Inclusive Education and Training System was approved, the Department of Education had to strategise how to successfully implement this paper. One of the most important components of the implementation of inclusive education is the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) released in 2008. The SIAS policy is aimed at improving access to quality education for vulnerable learners who experience barriers to learning, including learners in ordinary and special schools. Furthermore, the policy aim is to respond to the diverse needs of all learners within the schooling system and to facilitate school access for children who were marginalised or totally excluded (DBE 2008a; Bornman and Rose 2010).

The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support introduces new roles and responsibilities for the various stakeholders involved in the scholastic career of the child. It acknowledges the central role played by educators, parents, special schools as resource centres, full service schools, communities, District Based Support Teams and Institutional Level Support Teams (DBE, 2008a).

Inclusive education must be structured and function in such a manner that it accommodates learner diversity and needs. Therefore, inclusion entails more than just educators and learners

working together at school (Bornman & Rose, 2010). The theoretical framework of this study, which is Bronfenbrenner's (2011) ecosystemic theory, indicates that learners are linked to different organisms and their environment; therefore, all stakeholders have a responsibility towards all learners, especially those experiencing scholastic challenges (Van Niekerk, 2013).

The policy asserts that, in order to make inclusive education a reality, there needs to be a conceptual shift regarding the provision of support for learners who experience barriers to learning. The Department of Basic Education has adopted a strategy that will drive the implementation of inclusive education policies. Summarised, this policy has two major components, elaborated in two sets of guidelines:

1. The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (Department of Education 2008) guides inclusive education policy by defining the process of identification, assessment, and enrolment of learners in special schools, and it curbs the unnecessary placement of learners in special schools.
2. The SIAS strategy provides guidelines on early identification and support, the determination of the nature and level of support required by learners, and identification of the best learning sites for support. The strategy also provides guidelines on the central role of parents and teachers in implementing the strategy.

#### **2.4.2 Guidelines for responding to learner diversity in the classroom through the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)**

These guidelines are envisioned to provide teachers, principals and subject leaders with strategies on how to respond to learner diversity in the classrooms through the curriculum. The guidelines can be used for school-based teacher development to facilitate and support curriculum differentiation in the classroom. CAPS provides detailed guidance for teachers on what they should teach and how to assess.

According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, the Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 is based on the following principles:

- Social transformation: ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population;

- Active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths;
- High knowledge and high skills: the minimum standards of knowledge and skills to be achieved at each grade are specified and set high, achievable standards in all subjects;
- Progression: content and context of each grade shows progression from simple to complex;
- Human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice: infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 is sensitive to issues of diversity such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age, disability and other factors;
- Valuing indigenous knowledge systems: acknowledging the rich history and heritage of this country as important contributors to nurturing the values contained in the Constitution; and
- Credibility, quality and efficiency: providing an education that is comparable in quality, breadth and depth to those of other countries.

According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 aims to produce learners who are able to:

- identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking;
- work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team;
- organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively;
- collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information;
- communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes;
- use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others;
- demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

Although the CAPS provides detailed guidance on what teachers should teach and how to assess the learners, it does not provide guidelines on how to implement the required differentiated curriculum to address learning barriers in an overcrowded classroom.

The CAPS policy document does explain the concept of curriculum differentiation, but it does not provide samples of curriculum differentiated activities that teachers can use in the classroom with learners with different approaches to learning, nor examples of multilevel teaching to ensure that the needs of each learner is met in a large classroom.

## **2.5 THE EFFECT OF EDUCATION POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Motala and Pampallis (2001) have suggested that for the successful implementation of policies to occur, an examination of the implementation process itself must be done in relation to the very policies from which it is derived, while the relationship between policies and their implementation must be analysed simultaneously. According to Sandkull (2005) many definitions of inclusive education have evolved throughout the world. It ranges from extending the scope of ordinary schools so that they can include a greater diversity of children to a set of principles which ensure that the student with a disability is viewed as a valued and needed member of the community in every respect. Bailey (1998:173) views inclusion as *“being in an ordinary school with other students, following the same curriculum at the same time, in the same classroom, with the full acceptance of all, and in a way which makes the students feel no different from other students”*. Inclusive classrooms encourage an open and free channel of communication about differences as well as a respect for those with different abilities. In spite of these benefits, there still are many barriers to the implementation of inclusive education. Evans and Lunt (2012) observe that the implementation of inclusive education policies has been uneven globally.

The inclusion of learners with learning barriers into mainstream classes is part of a worldwide human rights movement. It has therefore become vital to create equal opportunities for all learners to learn and succeed. In 1996 the South African Schools Act (SASA) legislated that public schools must admit all learners and must attend to their educational needs without any unfair discrimination. White Paper 6 describes the Ministry of Education's commitment to providing educational opportunities for all learners so that all learners benefit from schooling.

School legislation is intended to guide teachers in the daily operations of the school. Schools sometimes feel inundated by new obligations. Sometimes a well-intended section of legislation may have unintended negative consequences. The education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng is greatly affected by unsuccessful policy

implementation, due to many factors that hamper the implementation of inclusion, such as large classrooms, lack of resources, lack of teacher training and difficulty in differentiating the curriculum successfully.

## **2.6 CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG**

Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) have identified the following challenges to the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa:

- The school buildings are inaccessible and unsafe for learners with physical disabilities.
- The existing curriculum is inflexible and does not cater for the needs of all learners.
- There is lack of resources such as toilets, sanitation, access to electricity and water, especially in rural areas.
- There is a general lack of support provision that can support teaching and learning in the schools.

### **2.6.1 Lack of teacher training and skills**

Prinsloo (2001) states that in spite of many attempts by the Department of Education to train and support teachers, most still experience a sense of powerlessness - a sense of not being in control of their situation. One of the issues that hampers progress is the lack of teacher skills in adapting the curriculum to meet a range of learning needs (Chataika, Mckenzie, Swart & Lyner-Cleophas 2012). Furthermore, in the article "Teacher preparedness for inclusive education", Hay, Smit, and Paulsen (2001) emphasise that the effective implementation of the programme depends on the high quality of professional preparation of teachers in all levels to equip them for and update their knowledge in handling mixed ability groups. Teachers who are not trained are at a major disadvantage to successful inclusion. According to Engelbrecht (1999), teachers may need training on how to identify and address special educational needs. Over and above practical skills, teachers need to develop a critical understanding of common stereotypes and prejudices related to disability and reflect on how they have influenced their own attitudes.

Inclusion can only occur if all teachers have a sound understanding of how to recognise barriers to learning, understand how to address the barriers and how to plan for diversity. Teachers should also be aware that some learners might experience more than one learning barrier. Jenkison (1997) indicates that teachers are faced with great challenges in the inclusive classroom. Commitment to a different professional role does not immediately empower teachers with the skills to carry out the new role successfully.

### **2.6.2 Lack of confidence**

A properly formulated curriculum, better training on special education, cooperation by all stakeholders, new oriented teaching methods, and carefully structured field experiences are very important factors that affect the self-efficacy and confidence of the teachers and form positive attitudes on the part of the teachers toward inclusive education (Robinson 2017). Teachers with high levels of confidence are prompt to modify the educational material so that it suits all learners' individual needs. Teachers acquire increased competence and confidence as a result of increased training in the field of inclusive education (Subban & Sharma 2005).

### **2.6.3 Large number of learners in classes**

Educators want to address their learners' individual needs. They want to be able to work with and understand the learners who they teach, and especially want to help the learners in their classes who have barriers to learning. This is difficult to do when class sizes are too large. The large number of learners in classes is making inclusive education challenging for educators. If a primary school teacher has between 35 to 50 learners in class, it will not be easy to address the individual needs of learners. If, in any of those classes, learners with language barriers, behavioural and emotional problems are added, the job of a teacher is compounded in ways that affect how they will reach all of the learners in that class. Learners with differences can be disruptive in class if they don't get the assistance they require, and this can be difficult for all learners.

### **2.6.4 Curriculum and curriculum differentiation**

The curriculum should reflect the overall aims of education that enable pupils with learning difficulties to develop skills and knowledge which will help them to live as independently in the community as possible and to make informed choices (Ferrel 1997). Brooth (1998) views

inclusive education as a process of increasing the participation of students in the culture and curricula of mainstream school and communities. Furthermore, Farrell (1997) indicates that, without a coherent curriculum which is relevant to the needs of pupils for whom it was designed, the quality of education will suffer. In any education system, the curriculum is one of the major obstacles to enable the development of an inclusive system. The current curriculum is often incapable of meeting the needs of a wide range of different learners. A rigid curriculum that does not allow flexibility for adaptations or experimentation with different teaching methods can be an enormous barrier to inclusion.

To address barriers in the classroom, teachers should use various curriculum differentiation strategies such as those included in the Department of Basic Education's Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (DoBE 2010). Two of the main guidelines are listed below:

- Teaching style – ensuring that learners experience a variety of approaches to teaching.
- Learning style – giving learners opportunities to respond to teaching in a variety of ways, whether by listening passively, participating actively in explorations and discoveries or taking the lead in solving problems;

The challenge is that teachers need to present lessons in order cater for all of the learning styles and multiple intelligences in an overcrowded classroom. When it comes to the learning style, it is described by MacKeracher (2004:71) as *“the characteristic of cognitive, affective, social, and physiological behaviours that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment”*. Brown (2000) explains learning styles as the way in which people comprehend and process information in learning situations. According to Gardner (1991) students possess different kinds of minds and, therefore, learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways. Gardner's theory on multiple intelligences include eight different types of intelligence and these intelligences guide the way we learn and process information. The eight different types of intelligence according to Gardner (1991) include the following:

#### **2.6.4.1 Verbal/linguistic intelligence**

Gardner (1993) explained this intelligence as sensitivity to the written and spoken language. These learners are word smart and use words effectively. These learners have highly

developed auditory skills and often think in words. They like reading, playing word games, making up poetry. They can be taught by encouraging them to say and see words and read books. They are great story tellers and they express themselves well. It is defined as the capacity to use language effectively whether in oral or written form (Armstrong 2009). Educators can accommodate these learners by playing word search games or include crossword puzzles.

#### **2.6.4.2      *Logical/mathematical intelligence***

Students who have this type of intelligence are good at exploring patterns and relationships, problem solving and reasoning (Gardner 1999). These learners are number smart and are curious about the world around them. They ask a lot of ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. They like to do experiments and reason things out. They question and wonder about natural events. They think sequentially and want to know what happens next. This intelligence *“consists of the capacity to analyse problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically”* (Smith 2002:24). Educators can include activities such as brain teasers and use manipulative materials during lessons to cater for learners with logical intelligence.

#### **2.6.4.3      *Visual/spatial intelligence***

According to Maier (1998), spatial intelligence is the ability to move in space, to orientate oneself, and to be able to think, plan and represent it. These learners tend to think in images and pictures. They’re able to recognise patterns, identify fine details, and have excellent observational skills. They have strong visual imagination. These learners enjoy looking at maps, charts, pictures, videos and movies and they are good at games like chess. Diezmann and Watters (2000:301) claim: *“Spatial intelligence may manifest as a particular aptitude for thinking and communicating spatially”*. To cater for these learners, educators can include visual thinking games, pictures and flashcards and use three dimensional models.

#### **2.6.4.4      *Musical/rhythmic intelligence***

Young learners have to use active listening to add to their understanding of and feelings about what they experience from sounds in the environment. It is therefore important that listening skills are developed in both the first and additional languages (Wessels & Van den Berg, 1998). This type of intelligence is the ability to identify patterns, pitch, rhythm, and the emotional side



of sound. These musically inclined learners think in sounds, rhythms and patterns. They learners often sing, hum or whistle to themselves. They respond immediately to music, either appreciating or criticising what they hear. Many of these learners are extremely sensitive to environmental sounds, e.g. dogs barking, birds chirping, etc. In schools, music can be used to promote social interaction, to motivate learners, to stabilise them emotionally and to help them work through possible perceptual, motor or learning problems (Van Deventer 1998).

#### **2.6.4.5      *Bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence***

This type of intelligence refers to how to control one's body movements and to handle objects skilfully. These learners express themselves through movement and they have excellent fine motor coordination. They are active and need to move around constantly and enjoy creating things with their hands. Gardner (1993) suggests that expressing an emotion in a dance, playing a game skilfully in sports or creating a new product or invention is evidence of the cognitive features of body usage. In the classroom, educators can include dancing, acting and hands on experiments to cater for these learners.

#### **2.6.4.6      *Interpersonal intelligence***

Interpersonal intelligence refers to one's ability to understand and communicate effectively with other people. It allows us to understand the motives, desires, and needs of others by interpreting their facial expressions and body language (Gardner 1993). These learners have strong people skills and they take the feelings of other people into consideration. They have many friends and are good at sorting out conflict. In the classroom educators can allow learners to interact with others when problem solving, assign activities that require them to meet and interact with people and include games that require cooperative play rather than only competitive games.

#### **2.6.4.7      *Intrapersonal intelligence***

According to Wheeler (2009), learners who have intrapersonal intelligence or are 'self-smarts' are interested in doing a set of activities in language classrooms which are totally different from those enjoyable to learners with interpersonal intelligence. They need private space and time. They are able to develop new behaviour based on self-knowledge and they are extremely good at setting goals because these learners have a good understanding of their strengths and

weaknesses. Teachers should set tasks by relating everything they learn to real life. Make use of a quiet corner where learners can use a notebook for writing journals. Educators can also include fun riddles to accommodate learners with intrapersonal intelligence.

#### **2.6.4.8      *Naturalistic intelligence***

According to Gardner (1993) naturalistic intelligence is the ability to identify, classify and manipulate elements of the environment, objects, animals or plants. These learners like to be outside and they have an interest in the weather and like to interact with their surroundings. They are curious about how things work and enjoy collecting data from the natural world. Educators can include activities such as reading the daily newspaper for articles on natural phenomena, sorting natural objects, observing natural surroundings and recycling activities.

Teachers are expected to differentiate the curriculum. The process of adapting the curriculum according to the different ability levels of the learners in the classroom is important. It is a strategy that teachers use with a view to providing meaningful learning experiences for all learners. Differentiation takes into account learner differences and matches curriculum content and assessment methods to learning styles and learner needs. According to Stanford (2003) changing teaching strategies and curricula without changing assessment methods will not bring about the full benefit of multiple intelligence theory for teaching and learning. Thus, if multiple intelligence theory is to be used in classrooms, educators must change the way they assess learners. With all the multiple intelligences in a classroom, the teachers clearly face an enormous challenge in an overcrowded classroom to ensure that the needs of each learner is met on a daily basis.

#### **2.6.5 Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion**

Teachers' attitudes play a vital role in the success of inclusive education. DeBoer (2011) suggested that the successful implementation of inclusion is dependent on the teacher's willingness to accept the inclusion model. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) emphasise the fact that the successful implementation of any inclusive policy is largely dependent on educators being positive about it. Engelbrecht (1999) stated that teachers are human beings with individual attitudes to difference and disability, and many may initially resist the notion of

inclusion, and teachers with little experience of people with disabilities are likely to have negative attitudes to inclusion.

Teacher attitudes contribute to teaching effectiveness and succeeding in learning opportunities. Hattie (2009) highlighted the importance of teacher attitudes as an important factor contributing toward student learning via the influence that teacher attitudes have on teaching practices and the classroom environment. Taylor and Ringlaben (2012) underlined the detrimental impact of negative attitudes toward inclusive education as these attitudes extend throughout the school culture, and these attitudes result in teaching practices that impede student learning. Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion might turn into a more positive one if, along with training, they were to receive the appropriate service support for their learners with barriers to learning.

#### **2.6.6 Funding**

Sufficient funding is essential for inclusion and yet it is rare. Schools often lack acceptable facilities, teacher empowerment through training, appropriate resources and specialised learning materials and equipment to support learners with disabilities in mainstream schools. Wildeman & Nomdo (2007) state that poor funding is an important cause of delay in the non-implementation of policies. If funds are set aside for the implementation of inclusive education, the transition will be viewed more positively. In large classrooms, educators would benefit from having an assistant teacher in the classroom to help assist the learners and provide one-on-one support that some learners desperately need. Some mainstream school do not even have enough textbooks, workbooks, stationery or tables and chairs for the large number of learners in a classroom, yet educators are expected to cater for all the needs of the learners. Dedicated teachers, like myself, use some of their own money to buy teaching material for the learners with barriers in order to accommodate these learners, but at the same time they try to accommodate the rest of the learners in the large classroom.

#### **2.6.7 Parental involvement**

*"Parental involvement, in almost any form, produces measurable gains in student achievement"* (Dixon 1992:16). Pinantoan (2013) pointed out the influence of parental involvement on a student's academic success should not be underestimated. Penh (2005:16) further emphasised that parental involvement in their children is a key factor in education progress. It is even more

important for those children who are vulnerable to exclusion and who have impairments which make learning more challenging. Penh also expressed the fact that parent-teacher communication and collaboration is crucial, yet it is often difficult to achieve even though parents have a key role to play in supporting their children and in campaigning for inclusive education.

Morin (2013) states that the best tip for school success is to make sure that parents and teachers are working together as allies. When parents are involved in the education of their child, it does not only benefit the child, but also the educator. Children develop better social skills and show improved behaviour when their parents are involved at school. When learners feel supported at home and at school, they develop a more positive attitude about school, and develop more self-confidence. Children of involved parents are more likely to feel that they are accepted and respected at school.

Despite all the benefits of involved parents, schools still face many challenges regarding parent involvement. One reason for parents not being involved in their child's schooling is shortage of time. Parents have to work long hours to maintain the financial standing of the family. Another important reason is parents who are illiterate do not feel confident to talk to teachers for the fear of not being able to understand the teacher's questions or they don't know how to respond to questions. According to Lemmer (2007) this situation is made worse by the fact that some parents are unable to read and write and they can only communicate in their mother tongue, which makes it difficult for them to assist their children with their homework. According to Wanat (1992:47), *"Schools must understand that lack of participation by parents does not necessarily mean they are neglecting their responsibilities. They simply may not have the time, resources, or know-how to help out"*.

#### **2.6.8 Parents are in denial**

According to Bertram Malle (2014) denial can involve a flat out rejection of the existence of a fact or reality. In other cases, it might involve admitting that something is true, but minimizing its importance. Sometimes people will accept reality and the seriousness of the fact, but they will deny their own responsibility and instead blame other people or other outside forces. Parents are often in denial and refuse to acknowledge that their child has a disability or learning barrier. Parents in denial may make excuses for their child's academic delays because they

don't want to accept that a disability is present. They may blame the school, teachers, poor teaching skills or a spouse instead of accepting that their child needs additional support in order to cope with the demands of a formal school setting. Early intervention is critical and if a parent is unwilling to acknowledge that they have a child with special needs, crucial time is lost. Some parents never get out of this stage and the only one who loses out is the child. Educators should get training on how to deal with parents who are in denial in order to support both the child and the parents. Parents often feel powerless when told of their child's disability (Watson 2008). They don't have a lot of knowledge about the topic and feel as if they are not in charge of their own child.

According to Margalit and Heiman (1986), children with disabilities seek the approval of their parents, so it is necessary for parents to have a positive attitude toward their education so they can succeed. When parents deny the needs of the child, the child will not strive to reach their full potential. They continue to receive negative attention and, therefore, their self-esteem is lowered. The effect of parental acceptance as perceived by the child is an important factor as it relates to the child's self-esteem. Gathering examples of learners' performance is an especially great tactic that teachers use in order to prove that learners are not coping. Again, this is additional pressure placed on the educator to ensure that adequate proof of support can be provided.

Educators are faced with the challenge of parents who are in denial and who do not accept that their child has a barrier to learning. This has a negative effect on the learners' schooling, as early intervention is not taking place by the parents at home. Intervention is done only by the educator, and this is a challenge in an overcrowded classroom, as individual support cannot always be provided due to the large number of learners in a classroom.

## **2.8 CONCLUSION**

The key issues discussed in this chapter were the main challenges in developing inclusive education and the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Inclusive education values diversity and the unique contributions each learner brings to the classroom. It is clear that South Africa's inclusive education system is in crisis. Even though various sections of legislation, policies and guidelines conceive of an inclusive education system, these policies simply look good on paper, but are not always

practical in an overcrowded classroom. In practice inclusion is restructuring schools and providing support to learners through different strategies that facilitate access and participation. A significant challenge faced by South Africa in the implementation of inclusion seems to be the training of teachers in the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required for successful inclusion. South African law and policy on inclusive education, both in conception and implementation, must be understood through the eyes of the teacher in the classroom who must not only adapt the curriculum, but also ensure every child feels safe and has a sense of belonging, whilst fighting to empower parents to stress their children's right to education. Inclusive education means that learners' needs are better met in a classroom with different and diverse learners who learn side by side in the same classroom.

Landsberg & Gericke (2002) concluded that inclusive education is a system-wide development demanding a wide range of changes involving the whole of the education system and bringing about reform in a number of areas. To build a more inclusive South Africa, a more inclusive education system is urgently needed, by making sure that educators have the training, flexibility and resources to teach learners with diverse needs and learning styles and ensure that schools receive adequate and sustainable financial support so that all activities can be fully inclusive. With inclusion, learners may be placed into a mainstream class, but their differences don't go away. Even with well-planned inclusive services, educators often struggle with how to effectively teach students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Although South Africa's laws and policies on the education of learners with barriers to learning are relatively innovative, a critical analysis of those laws and policies reveals that there are some gaps to successful implementation.

In research methodology discussed in the next chapter the researcher explains the research approach and research methods used in the study.

Creditability and trustworthiness are also explained in detail. The researcher describes the trustworthiness of the researcher's findings by looking at what the researcher has done to make the results and findings are credible.

## **CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study is concerned with the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. In the previous chapter, the researcher focused on getting insight into inclusive education policies to ensure learners receive education according to their individual needs. It also explained the challenges educators experience to enforce inclusion in multicultural and overcrowded public school classrooms. This chapter explains the research aim, research approach and research methodology used in conducting the study. This research design and methodology chapter demonstrates how the research outcome was obtained in line with meeting the objective of the study. The design of a qualitative case study research methodology is also described. The chapter addresses as well the sampling techniques, population selection, data collection procedures and the data analysis processing methods. Finally, the creditability and trustworthiness of the study will also be presented.

The purpose of the study is to highlight challenges that learners and teachers experience in the classroom to ensure successful implementation of inclusive education. The main aim of this study is to determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. These research problems, aims and objectives are listed in section 3 of chapter one, but are mentioned again below to highlight the research problems, aims and objectives.

### **3.2 Research problems**

The research problem is a general statement of an issue meriting research. Kothari (2009) defines a research problem as some difficulty which a researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation and wants to obtain a solution for the same. The purpose of the study leads to the main problem statement that can be phrased as a research question, namely: How do educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms? This main research question was divided into a few sub-questions that assisted in guiding the study:

- What challenges are teachers facing to implement inclusion policies in Gauteng classrooms?

- How do teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?
- Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school?
- Are the needs of learners truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH**

#### **3.3.1 The research design**

According to Kothari (2004), research design is a plan, a roadmap and blueprint strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions; it is the heart of any study. Research design is a plan to answer the research question, whereas the research method is a strategy used to implement that plan. Research design focuses on the end-product. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to effectively address the research problem as explicitly as possible. A focus group is qualitative research because it asks participants for open-ended responses conveying thoughts or feelings. Zikmund (1988:41) defined research design as *“a master plan specifying the methods and procedure for collecting and analysing the needed information”*. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) outline research design as a plan that describes the conditions and procedures for collecting and analysing data. The purpose of the research design is to lay down a plan for generating first-hand evidence that will be used to answer the research questions.

For this particular study the researcher made use of a questionnaire to gather biographical data from the respondent. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to better understand the participants' insights about inclusive education in an overcrowded classroom. A focus group discussion took place to allow participants the opportunity to enter into conversation with each other in order to gather information from participants with related experiences. Document analysis were conducted to identify how policies are implemented within the school to accommodate inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms.



### 3.3.2 The research approach

The qualitative research design was used in this study to gather information about the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Cresswell (2007) asserted the importance of illustrating the research approach as an effective strategy to increase the validity of social research. Qualitative research reveals people's values, interpretative schemes, mind maps, belief systems and rules of living so that respondents' reality can be understood (Cavana et al., 2001). Quantitative research has the following characteristics according to (Brink & Wood 1998:305; Burns & Grove 1997:27-30 and 1999:192):

- There is a single reality that can be defined by careful measurement.
- It is usually concise.
- It describes and examines relationships, and determines causality among variables, where possible.
- Statistical analysis is conducted to reduce and organise data, determine significant relationships and identify differences and/or similarities within and between different categories of data.
- Reliability and validity of the instruments are crucial.
- Comprehensive data collected by employing different methods and/or instruments should result in a complete description of the variable or the population studied.
- It provides an accurate account of characteristics of particular individuals, situations, or groups.

The researcher posed questions in a way that does not lead group members to provide desired responses, but rather honest and insightful responses. Due to the open conversation among group members, topics and discussions are unrestricted and members can use comments from others to stimulate recall. Qualitative research is based on words, feelings, emotions, sounds and unquantifiable elements. It has been noted by Herbst and Coldwell (2004) that information is considered qualitative in nature, if it is not analysed by means of numerical data. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) describe qualitative research as a type of research that refers to an in-depth study using face-to-face or observation techniques to collect data from people in their natural settings.

Qualitative research seeks to understand the participants' experiences; in this study the researcher wanted to find out what is the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. According to Creswell (2003:9), *"qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field"*. This study adopted a qualitative case study design that assisted the researcher to achieve the study objectives. The case study design was descriptive in nature and was an instrumental case study. The qualitative method brings in qualities such as warmth, involvement, compassion, humanism and commitment (Rubin & Babbie 2001).

### **3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

This section includes the process of selecting participants, the population of the study and samples for the study. In this study, an exploratory qualitative case study methodology was applied to study how educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. Before the sample was collected, the researcher had to determine the population.

#### **3.4.1 Population of the study**

Polit and Hungler (1999:37) refer to the population *"as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications"*. A population is a group of individuals that share common connections. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), a population can be defined as a group of elements or cases which conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research. The population of the study included educators who must provide inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in the region of research. The Gauteng region was selected due to its accessibility for the researcher.

#### **3.4.2 Sample of the study**

LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998) describe a sample as a portion or a subset of the research population selected to participate in a study, representing the research population. Sampling, which basically consists of sample size and sampling design considerations, is very important in all qualitative research. Such considerations help qualitative researchers to select sample sizes and sample designs that are most compatible with their research purposes (Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2007). According to Flick (2011), the size of the sample is essential in determining the

reliability of the results of a study. Teachers with overcrowded classrooms were selected for this sample. These participants were selected based on the purpose of the research study which was to highlight real challenges that learners and teachers experience on a daily basis in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng.

As indicated in chapter one, the sample for this study consisted of four teachers (n=4) from the same school, one per grade because the school has four grades in Foundation Phase, namely: Grade R, Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3. The researcher used teachers with the highest number of learners in the class to gain in-depth information on their experiences and skills.

### **3.4.3 Sampling technique**

A qualitative researcher must ensure that the participants have experience with the phenomenon under study. As most qualitative data is collected through interactions with participants through the use of interviews, questionnaires or focus groups, the researcher must find participants who are willing to speak about their experiences. From each of the selected grades in the Foundation Phase, one teacher was requested to be a respondent in a focus group interview to provide information on the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. The total number of participants were thus four teachers. The researcher named the selected teachers A to D for ethical reasons. Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton 2002). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark 2011).

## **3.5 INSTRUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

### **3.5.1 Instrumentation**

According to Arikunto (2006:126), *“the device the researcher uses to collect data is called an instrument”*. In data collection, it is important to find out which instrument or tool will better serve the purpose of the study in order to obtain the right information that will answer the research questions. The instrument has important functions in this research study and is one of the significant steps in conducting this research. A research instrument is a tool for collecting data

that should be valid and reliable. Polit and Hungler (1999:267) define data as *“information obtained during the course of an investigation or study”*. For this study the researcher used a broad spectrum of methods, including semi-structured interviews, group discussion, questionnaires and document analysis to answer the research question. The success of the research study is decided to a large extent by the instrument(s) used. Combining two or more data collection methods, for instance interviews as well as group discussion, also enhances the credibility of the study.

### **3.5.1.1 Semi-structured interview**

An ‘*interview*’ is typically a face-to-face conversation between a researcher and a participant involving a transfer of information to the interviewer (Cresswell 2012). The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say (McNamara 2009). Interviews are best suited for understanding participants’ insights and experiences. As Flick (1998:222) puts it, *“Practices are only accessible through observation; interviews and narratives merely make the accounts of practices accessible”*. Usually open-ended questions are asked during interviews in hopes of obtaining impartial answers, while closed ended questions may force participants to answer in a particular way (Creswell, 2012; McNamara, 1999). Ashworth and Lucas (2000) note that, in undertaking interviews, the researcher must ‘bracket’ or set aside his or her assumptions and theories and focus instead on the research participants’ points of view and their unique lived experience.

Arthur and Nazroo (2003) emphasise the importance of careful preparation for interviews, and particularly the preparation of a “topic guide” (otherwise known as an interview schedule). Semi-structured interviews enabled the participants to clarify policies, and to elaborate on personal viewpoints towards the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. The interviewer allowed the respondents to talk whilst she guided the conversation and recorded the answers (Crossman 2017).

Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003:138-169) present the interview process as having six stages, all of which need to be planned for, namely:

- Stage 1. Arrival: the first meeting between interviewee and interviewer has a crucial effect on the success of the interview; it is important to put participants at ease.

- Stage 2. Introducing the research: this involves ensuring that the participant is aware of the purpose of the research, and has given informed consent, that they are happy to have the interview recorded, and understand their right to withdraw.
- Stage 3. Beginning the interview: the early stages are usually about giving the participant confidence and gathering background facts to contextualize the rest of the interview.
- Stage 4. During the interview: the body of the interview will be shaped by the themes of interest for the research. Participants are likely to be thinking in a focused way about topics that they do not normally consider in such depth in their everyday lives.
- Stage 5. Ending the interview: Legard et al. emphasise the need to signal the end so that the participant can prepare for it and ensure there are no loose ends.
- Stage 6. After the interview: participants should be thanked and told what will happen next with their data. Many participants think of additional things to say once the recorder is off, and these may be noted.

The researcher took all six steps into consideration when planning the interview questions (see ANNEXURE I). The semi-structured interview for this study were done individually with participants and the interviews were recorded. The interviews took place at the school, but not during contact time. The time allocation was approximately 30 minutes.

### **3.5.1.2 *Exploratory questionnaire***

A questionnaire is an instrument for collecting primary data (Cohen, 2013). It is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. Open questions allow participants to express what they think in their own words. The most critical part of developing your questionnaire is defining what you want from it and how you will use the information to answer your research questions. By taking the time to define your purpose and objectives you will reduce the likelihood of gathering unusable information. In qualitative studies we use open-ended questionnaires to collect data which is information that can be observed and recorded but isn't numerical in nature.

According to Taylor (1998) successful questionnaires start with thorough planning. It includes the following steps:

- Step 1: Define the objectives.

- Step 2: Select the number and type of participants for your questionnaire.
- Step 3: Develop questions that clearly communicate what you want to know.
- Step 4: Decide when to use closed-ended versus open-ended questions.
- Step 5: Include demographic questions.
- Step 6: Place questions in a logical order that flows well.
- Step 7: Pilot test the questionnaire.

Please see annexure H: QUESTIONNAIRE for the full questionnaire of this study. The questions were formulated to answer the research question: How do educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms?

### **3.5.1.3 Focus group discussion**

A focus group is *“a group comprised of individuals with certain characteristics who focus discussions on a given issue or topic”* (Anderson 1990:241). A group discussion is a good way to gather information from people with related experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group is led by a moderator, in this case the researcher. The course of the discussion is usually planned in advance and most moderators rely on a moderator’s guide to ensure that all topics of interest are covered. According to Krueger and Casey (2000), individuals’ self-disclosure tends to be natural and comfortable.

Merton et al. (1990) identify the four criteria for judging the quality of the focus group, which include range, specificity, depth, and personal context. Krueger (1998) discussed the factors that determine the effectiveness of focus groups. These are: clarity of objective, suitable setting, adequate resources, appropriate subjects, skilled moderator, effective questions, and honouring the participants.

In this study the participants discussed the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng in a group setting. The participants were given the opportunity to enter into conversation with each other in a safe setting. All four participants participated in the discussion together. The discussion lasted for approximately 30 minutes. Focus group participants were asked questions in an interactive setting and were encouraged to discuss their opinions freely with other participants. Questions asked of group

participants should be based on the objectives of the research. While conducting a focus group, it is essential to record the meeting. The researcher will record the discussion through with an audio recording devise.

The aim of a focus group is to have the participants understand the topic of interest. The focus group discussion generates the opportunity to collect data from the group interaction, which concentrates on the topic of the researcher's interest, in this case: The effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng (see ANNEXURE J). The researcher needed to be flexible and free of bias.

#### **3.5.1.4 Document analysis**

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents. Scott (1990:28) asserted that the *“ultimate purpose of examining documents is to arrive at an understanding of the meaning and significance of what the document contains”*. Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic (Bowen 2009). Before document analysis can take place, the researcher must go through a detailed planning process in order to ensure reliable results. O’Leary (2014) outlines eight steps in the planning process that should take place:

- Step 1: Create a list of texts to explore (e.g. population, samples, participants).
- Step 2: Consider how texts will be accessed with attention to linguistic or cultural barriers.
- Step 3: Acknowledge and address biases.
- Step 4: Develop appropriate skills for research.
- Step 5: Consider strategies for ensuring credibility.
- Step 6: Know the data one is searching for.
- Step 7: Consider ethical issues (e.g., confidential documents).
- Step 8: Have a backup plan.

Document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Bowen identifies the concept of document analysis as a process of *“evaluating documents in such a*

*way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed” (2009:33).* Document analysis as an approach is recommended by numerous authors; for example, Bryman (2003) suggests that analysing documents can bring multiple advantages to the qualitative research study. In his view they can provide information on issues that cannot readily be addressed through other methods; they can check the validity of information derived from other methods; and they can contribute a different level of analysis from other methods.

According to Document Review, updated August 2018, regarding data collection methods for evaluation, it clearly states the reasons why document analysis is important:

- To gather background information. Reviewing existing documents helps you understand the history, philosophy, and operation of the program you are evaluating and the organization in which it operates.
- To determine if implementation of the program reflects program plans. The review of program documents may reveal a difference between formal statements of program purpose and the actual program implementation. It is important to determine if such a difference exists and to clarify the program intent before moving forward with the evaluation.
- When you need information to help you develop other data collection tools for evaluation. Reviewing existing documents to better understand the program and organization you are evaluating will help you formulate questions for interviews, questionnaires, or focus groups or develop an observation guide.

Furthermore, the Document Review, updated August 2018, regarding data collection methods for evaluation also highlights the advantages of document analysis:

- Relatively inexpensive.
- Good source of background information.
- Unobtrusive.
- Provides a behind-the-scenes look at a program that may not be directly observable.
- May bring up issues not noted by other means.

In this research, only documents relating to the problem were analysed. Document analysis focused on how policies are implemented within the school to accommodate inclusive



education in overcrowded classrooms. Documents that were analysed included the SIAS policy and the White Paper 6, and also school memos and minutes of staff meetings and manuals related to inclusive education. The analytic procedure entails finding, selecting and making sense of data contained in documents. By analysing the policy documents, it offers background insights into understanding educational problems in both research and practice.

### **3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In this study, the researcher adhered to the ethical rules prescribed by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and applied for ethics approval from the College of Education Ethics Committee at the University of South Africa for permission to conduct the research study. The researcher obtained written permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to allow the researcher to conduct research within the Gauteng East District. The researcher also obtained written permission from the school principal and the School Governing Body to conduct research. Lastly, the researcher provided formal invitations to the participants for the semi-structured interviews, questionnaire and group discussion. The invitations explained how the interviews would be conducted and had a consent form attached to guarantee to the participants that the information would be kept confidential.

Ezigbo (2009) emphasises that ethics are a set of moral principles of conduct used to govern the decision-making behaviour of an individual or a group of individuals. Furthermore, these principles guide individuals in their dealings with other individuals or groups and provide a basis for deciding whether behaviour is right or wrong. According to Sarantakos (2005), in qualitative research, the researcher needs to design an enlightened permission form for research participants to sign before they get involved in the study. In this section the researcher discusses some ethical considerations in this research that included the concepts of informed consent, anonymity, privacy and confidentiality.

#### **3.6.1 Permission to conduct the study**

The researcher applied for ethics approval from the College of Education Ethics Committee at the University of South Africa for clearance. The applications for permission to conduct the study were submitted to the Department of Education (see ANNEXURE B) in order to conduct the research within the Gauteng East District. Written permission was obtained from the school

principal and School Governing Body. The participants also provided written consent for the interviews, group discussions and questionnaires (see ANNEXURE E).

### **3.6.2 Informed consent**

All participants were required to provide written informed consent. The potential participants were approached individually and given a description of the purpose of the study and the data collection process was explained in detail. Participants were given sufficient time to reflect before making a decision to join a study and the researcher provided time to ask questions and address any concerns of the participants. It was explained that their participation was voluntary. As stated by Polit and Hungler (1999), researchers need to exercise care that the individuals and institutions are safeguarded; therefore, the signed consent forms were folded and placed in a box prior to the completion of the interviews, group discussions and questionnaires. The box of consent forms was placed in the safe room of the school storage area.

### **3.6.3 Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality**

Confidentiality and anonymity, as described by McMillan and Schumacher (2006), simply means that the setting and participants should not be identifiable in all reporting. To maintain confidentiality, I gave the participants letters when transcribing and translating the data. Prior to conducting any interviews and group discussion, I obtained permission to record the participants' voices. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were preserved by not revealing their names and identities in the data collection, analysis and reporting of the study findings. Privacy and confidentiality of the interview environment were managed carefully during the interview sessions, data analysis and dissemination of the findings. Privacy refers to the right that all information collected in the course of the study will be kept in strictest confidence (Point & Hungler 1999). Confidentiality was also maintained because no names were disclosed in the research report.

The researcher pursued ethical clearance from the University of South Africa to ensure that the anonymity, privacy and confidentiality of participants were adhered to at all times. Johnson and Christensen (2000:83) add that anonymity will imply that the "identity of the participants is not known to the researcher". The researcher will explain to each participant, without bias, what the

study entails in order to overcome any negative effects that might result from any respondent's participation (Tuckman 1988:15).

### 3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:52) the aim of data analysis is *“to transform information or data into an answer to the original research question”*. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) emphasise that qualitative data analysis needs to be conducted with rigour and care. Data analysis is done to preserve the uniqueness of each participant's lived experience while permitting an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In this section the focus is on the types of qualitative data analysis that were used in the research study.

Data analysis determines the meaning of the data collected (Johnson and Christensen 2004:500). Neuman (2003:447) defines data analysis as a *“search for patterns in data recurrent behaviours, objects or body of knowledge”*. Ngulube (2005a:138) states that data analysis can help the researcher to understand the social process operation. There are certain steps to be followed in analysing qualitative data. After the steps had been followed, the data should be grouped together according to categories and themes. Presentation of data is then done according to these categories and themes and presented via quotes from the participants. In addition, he also explained that knowledge of data analysis may help the researcher to better interpret, conclude and make recommendations regarding the study. In collecting data for this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, a group discussion and a questionnaire combined with an in-depth understanding of documents such as relevant policies related to the research. Data collection occurred in the school setting either during or after school hours. The semi-structured interviews were recorded individually, and transcriptions were done verbatim.

According to Bless and Smith (2000:137) data is analysed to detect the consistency of respondents through the data pattern, like the consistent covariance of two or more variables. Wamundila (2008:106) stated that *“Microsoft Word ® can also be applied for the analysis of qualitative data.”* and this was the case with this study. This study made use of the manual data analysis process by using the questionnaire questions to create a recording sheet. Once the participants returned the questionnaire sheets, the researcher captured the data onto the recording sheet. After the questionnaire recording sheet was completed, the recordings were calculated and the calculated figures were then captured into an MS Excel® Spread-sheet

database. By using the collected data, the researcher developed graphs from the spread-sheet database and then exported the graphs the MS Word® document for appropriate analysis.

According to Fidel (2008:269), *“the end-product of the qualitative method is text that includes image and drawing”*. By analysing data in a table it was easier for the researcher to interpret the data. The researcher subsequently gave meaning to the tables and the graphs used for data analysis. Accurate data analysis should provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon under investigation: the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms.

### **3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH**

The trustworthiness of qualitative designs is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the researcher and the participants. The researcher ensured trustworthiness by trying to understand different perspectives and aiming at a singular truth or generalisation. In other words, the researcher and the participants agreed on the description and meaning of events. Strategies that were used in this study to ensure trustworthiness were as follows (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2014):

- **Participant language that will be used in the study:** *The direct liberal statements and quotations from participants will be used.*
- **The researcher included the use of mechanically recorded data (tape recorder):** *This strategy will ensure that direct statements are used from the participants and provides accurate and relatively complete records. Situational aspects that influences the data record will be noted to further enhance trustworthiness and to make the data usable.*
- **Participant review:** *Participants will be asked to review the researcher’s synthesis of the interview and to modify any information from the interview data for accuracy. Then the data obtained from each interviewee will be analysed for a comprehensive integration of findings.*
- **Triangulation:** *Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton*

1999). *Qualitative cross-validation will be done among multiple data sources, data collection strategies, time periods, and theoretical schemes (Gunawan 2015). Triangulation means using more than one method to collect data on the same topic. This technique is used to confirm recommended findings, but it can also be used to determine the extensiveness of data. In this study the researcher used multiple literature resources to confirm and enhance the research findings. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) describe triangulation as a way of collecting research data from different sources and settings, and analysing the same data by applying different analytical techniques.*

- **Detailed transcriptions:** *The in-depth interviews will be transcribed in detail (Gunawan 2015). Transcription is the act of providing a written account of spoken words. In qualitative research, transcription is conducted of individual or group interviews and generally written verbatim (exactly word-for-word). Further, transcription is understood to reflect theory and to shape it (Du Bois 1991).*
- **Member checking:** *This refers to verification from the participants. During the interviews, questions can be rephrased to obtain more complete meanings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) highlighted some positive aspects of member-checking, namely:*
  - *Provides an opportunity to understand and assess what the participant intended to do through his or her actions*
  - *Gives participants opportunity to correct errors and challenge what are perceived as wrong interpretations*
  - *Provides the opportunity to volunteer additional information which may be stimulated by the playing back process*
  - *Gets respondent on the record with his or her reports*
  - *Provides an opportunity to summarize preliminary findings*
  - *Provides respondents the opportunity to assess adequacy of data and preliminary results as well as to confirm particular aspects of the data*

### 3.9 CONCLUSION

This research design and methodology chapter demonstrated how the research outcome was obtained in line with meeting the objective of the study. The design of the qualitative case study research methodology was described. The chapter addressed the sampling techniques,

population selection, data collection procedures and the data analysis processing methods. Ethical considerations and trustworthiness of the study were also presented in this chapter. In the next chapter, the researcher focuses on the presentation, analysis and discussion of the obtained data. Sampling and data analysis are interpreted to gain an understanding of educators' and learners' challenges regarding inclusive education in an overcrowded, multicultural classroom by selecting educators to participate in the interview process. The analysed interview data is also presented.

## **CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH DATA**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study is concerned with the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. The purpose of the study is to highlight real struggles learners and teachers experience every day. The main aim of this study is to determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng Province.

The previous chapter explored the sampling techniques; a qualitative researcher must ensure that the participants have experience with the phenomenon under study. The population selection was discussed and the population of the study included educators who must provide inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in the region of research, Gauteng. Data collection procedures and the data analysis processing methods were discussed in detail and included a broad spectrum of methods, including semi-structured interviews, group discussion, questionnaires and document analysis to answer the research question. Finally, the trustworthiness of the study was also presented and the researcher will ensure trustworthiness by trying to understand different perspectives and aiming at a singular truth or generalisation.

In this chapter, the researcher focused on the presentation, analysis and discussion of the obtained data through the individual interviews, the focus group discussion and document analysis that was done during the research study. The purpose of the study was to highlight real struggles learners and teachers experience every day, and to get teachers' perspectives on inclusive education and what it means to them. The main aim of this study was to determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms. The following objectives derive from this aim, namely to:

- determine different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school;
- explore various challenges teachers are facing when implementing inclusion policies in the classroom;
- establish if inclusive education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a Gauteng public school; and

- determine if the needs of learners are truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng.

This chapter will outline the research process, present and analyse the data and finally conclude with the interpretation of the data.

## **4.2 THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

The researcher made use of a qualitative case study method for collecting data. A broad spectrum of methods, including semi-structured interviews, group discussion, questionnaires and document analysis, were used to answer the research question. Participants were informed that the interviews would be recorded, and the information that was gathered during the interviews would be used to write a research report that would be used merely for academic purposes. The research report would not include any names or other information regarding the institution so as to maintain confidentiality. Participants were also informed that they had a right to withdraw their participation at any time without suffering any repercussions. As indicated in chapter three, the researcher named the selected teachers A to D for ethical reasons. The sample for this study consisted of four teachers (n=4) from the same school, who participated in both the semi-structured interviews and the focus group. The researcher used four teachers as participants for the study, one per grade because we have four grades in Foundation Phase, namely: Grade R, Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3. The researcher used teachers with the highest number of learners in the class to gain in-depth information on their experiences and skills.

### **4.2.1 Method used for collecting data**

In order for the researcher to collect data, various institutions needed to provide approval for the research to be conducted. The first step was to get an approval letter from the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee. Once the approval was granted (ANNEXURE A), the researcher made contact with the Gauteng Department of Education. When the researcher received this approval to proceed with the research study (ANNEXURE C), it was time to contact the school to start the data collecting process. An appointment was set with the school principal to seek permission to conduct a research study at the school. The researcher



explained the research process that would be used, and the principal provided the names of suitable teachers to include in the data collecting process.

The principal provided written consent from the school and the School Governing Body to proceed with the research study. Contact was then made with the teachers who were recommended by the principal to participate in the study to explain the process of data collection, and to get written consent from the teachers to take part in the research study. Once the written consent was received from the teachers, the principal agreed to a set timetable to conduct the interviews with the teachers.

For this study the researcher used a wide variety of methods, including semi-structured interviews with four teachers, followed by a group discussion with four teachers, a questionnaire to obtain biographical data from the participants and, lastly, document analysis to answer the research question.

#### **4.2.2 Challenges experienced during the research process**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gauteng Department of Education issued a letter to all researchers to inform them that schools are not allowed to have visitors, including researchers. The letter also stated that researchers must make arrangements with the schools via telephone, fax or e-mail. This was a setback, but because I was employed at the school, and we follow strict social distancing measures, the Gauteng Department of Education provided permission to continue with the research, via e-mail, as long as everyone agreed.

During the interviews, all participants had to wear a facemask. All interview events had to adhere to strict social distancing measures. I was concerned that it would hamper the quality of the recordings, but luckily it did not interfere with the quality of the recordings.

#### **4.2.3 Positive aspects experienced during the research process**

The school principal was very accommodating and supportive throughout the entire process. The participants were very eager and enthusiastic about taking part in the research study and their contribution was of great value to the research. It was a great pleasure to conduct the research study at the sampled primary school.

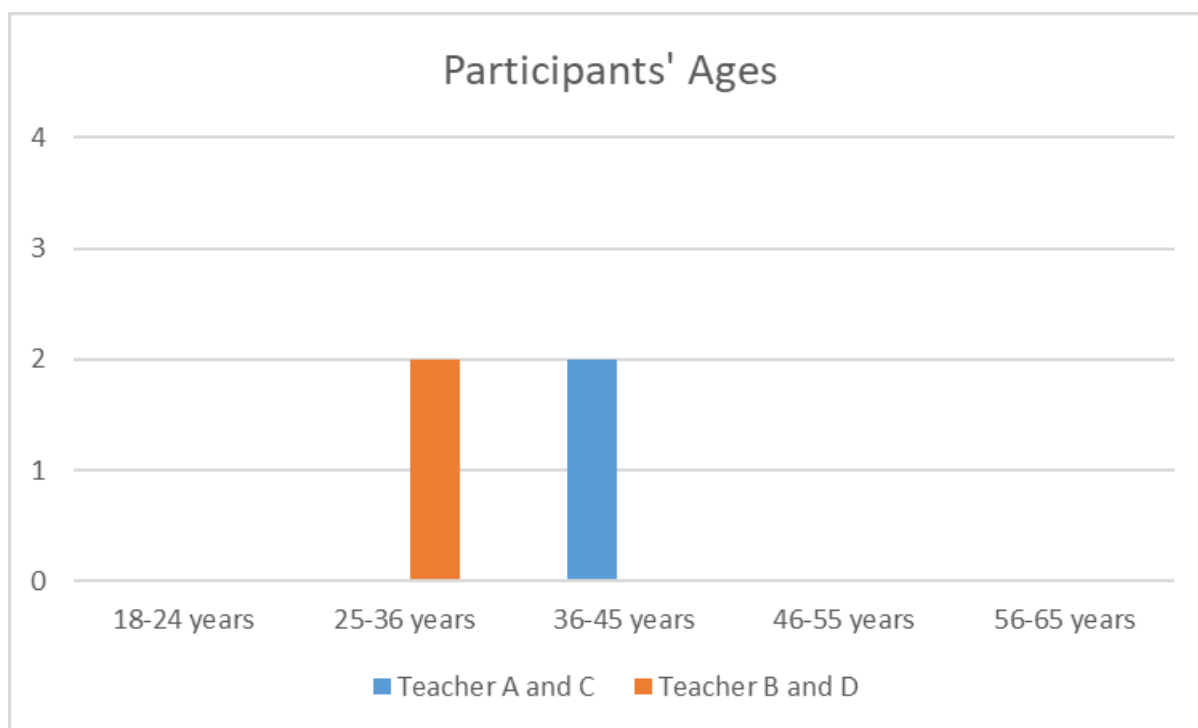
## 4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF THE PARTICIPANTS

### 4.3.1 Introduction

During the data collecting process, the biographical data of the participants was acquired via sections A and B of the questionnaire. This section identified teachers' experience in the field as well as the number of years' teaching experience each participant had.

### 4.3.2 Participants' ages

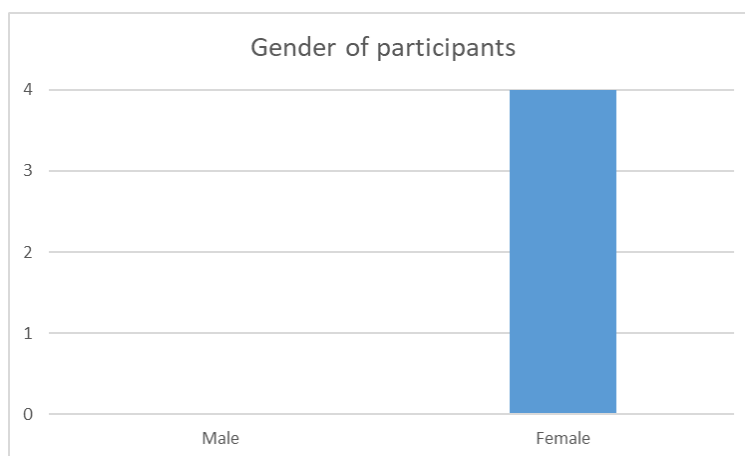
**Figure 1**



The figure above shows that teachers between the ages of 25 and 45 were sampled. This was done to see if teaching experience and teacher training influences the successful implementation of inclusive education policies. In this case, two teachers were between the ages of 25-35 years and two teachers were between 36-45 years.

### 4.3.3 Participants' gender

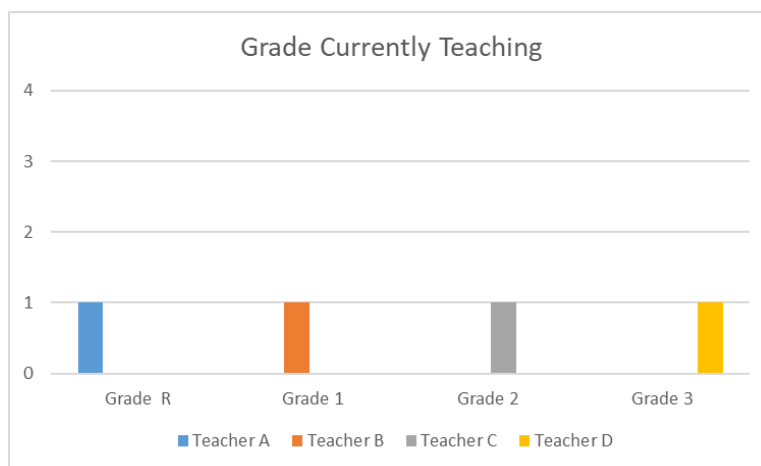
**Figure 2**



The figure above indicates that four female teachers were selected to participate in the research study. All the teachers teaching in the Foundation Phase of the school were female teachers, hence all participants were female.

### 4.3.4 Participants' grade currently teaching

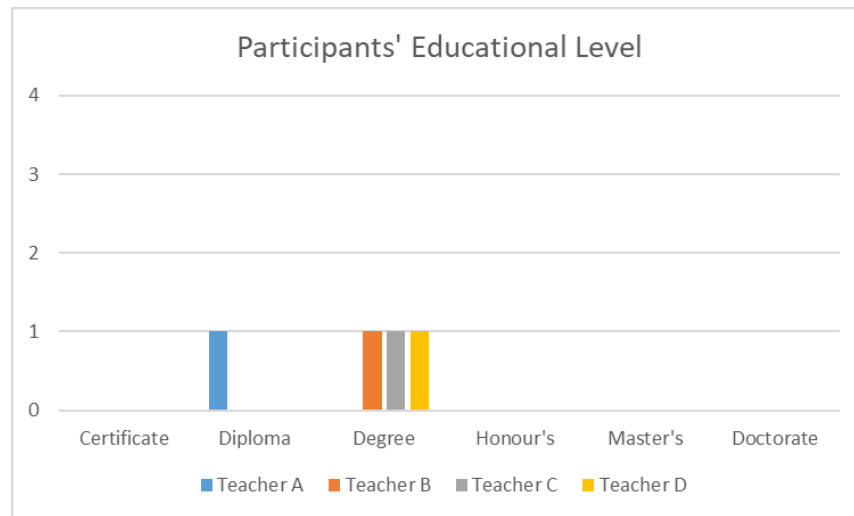
**Figure 3**



The figure above indicates the grade that each participant was currently teaching. The participants were selected to spread over the entire Foundation Phase, from Grade R to Grade 3 to better understand the research question: The effect of policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng.

#### 4.3.5 Participants' educational levels

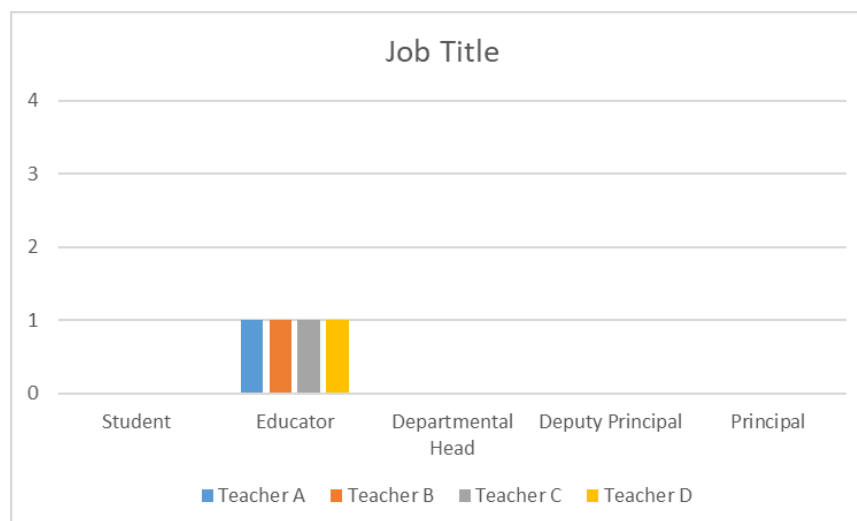
**Figure 4**



The figure above shows that teacher A has a teaching diploma, and teachers B, C and D all have teaching degrees.

#### 4.3.6 Participants' job titles

**Figure 5**



The figure above indicates the participants' job title. All four teachers are educators.

### **4.3.7 Summary**

The researcher included the above data to show that teachers with different ages, different levels of education and different years of teaching experiences participated in the study. By collecting this information, it highlighted the fact that, despite the different levels of education and various years of teaching experiences between the educators, they all face the same challenges in the classroom.

## **4.4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.4.1 Data obtained from the semi-structured individual interviews**

The data obtained from the interviews held with teachers was carefully transcribed. The transcriptions were used to organise the data into categories and themes according to the sub-objectives of the study.

#### ***4.4.1.1 Different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following categories that were derived from the obtained data:

##### **a) Typical day in the classroom**

Participants were asked to explain a typical day in their classroom. The researcher asked this question to see if teachers view inclusive education as part of their daily routine in their classroom. It is important for inclusive education to form part of a teacher's daily routine, as learners should be supported continuously. When discussing a typical day in a classroom, teachers should mention different ways to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms, as it forms part of the day-to-day activities. The respective participants answered as follows:

##### **Teacher A:**

*We start our day by praying, then we do the class register. We do birthdays and weather, after that we do what all my learners love the most, our morning circle on the carpet. Our routine includes our helper and weather routine. Our highlighting concept we might focus on a letter or a shape, a*

*colour or any number, that is our theme discussion as well. After that we dive into a story based on the week's topic. I ask them questions and then they answer, we end with a rhyme or song. We then do the toilet routine, we start our art work and we go for our first break. After break we have a toilet routine again, and we do beginning knowledge, after that we go out for playtime. Story time. Then it is the end of our day.*

**Teacher B:**

*Firstly, we start, we open and we greet each other, say the morning prayer, check the homework, hand in money, do the register, then we start with maths while learners are still eager to learn. I find that learners like structure and discipline, then they learn better. After first break we normally start with English, home language and then after second break we divided between Life Skills Afrikaans, like I said a set routine is important in the classroom.*

**Teacher C:**

*First we would greet and I would ask a few learners to tell me what they did the day before and then we would start with mathematics. I try to include a fun activity and then do the workbook. After that would be English, try to do fun and then afterwards it is either Afrikaans or Life Skills.*

**Teacher D:**

*The learners come into the classroom, we greet, we do register. They will open their homework books and do their spelling words that they take home to spell at home, the reason why we spell in class is because most of the children don't spell at home with their parents. They don't have parental involvement. I am walking around, checking if the children understand the sum, I am helping each child that is struggling with either their number formation or with their reversals. I reteach. If the child still doesn't understand it after that, then I send reinforcement home to the parent to support them at home.*

South Africa is following an inclusive education policy; therefore, it is imperative for a teacher to have a sound understanding of inclusive education in the day-to-day classroom setting. From the responses given by the participants, it can be concluded that not all teachers view inclusive education as part of their daily routine. The majority of the participants did not talk about inclusive education in their daily routine. Teacher D explained in detail how to cater for learners, but the other participants did not elaborate on this. Inclusion is not yet part of teachers' language when speaking about their daily learning and teaching experiences. Having knowledge about inclusion provides teachers with skills to teach in a manner that includes all learners I do feel that this is not achieved in our education system. Teachers are not confident to administer inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng.

#### **b) Understanding of inclusive education**

The respondents were questioned about their understanding of inclusive education. The researcher asked this question to form an idea of the teachers' views on what inclusive education means to them. Before a teacher can implement inclusive education in various ways, it must first be understood. Participants answered as follows:

##### **Teacher A:**

*My understanding is that all students attend and are welcomed by the neighbourhood schools in age appropriate, regular classes and are supported by the teachers to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school.*

##### **Teacher D:**

*My understanding is that it is education for all learners, despite barriers to learning or learning disabilities or any other barriers, economic, social or language barriers.*

##### **Teacher B:**

*Inclusive education is education which ensure the right to education of all learners, irrespective of their individual characteristics and difficulties, cultural diversities or language orientation. Inclusion also acknowledges that all learners with support can learn by using a common curriculum. Schools should provide education which serves the needs of all learners.*

**Teacher C:**

*Basically, I understand it as every child, doesn't matter what learning difficulty they face, they should be included in a mainstream classroom and you need to accommodate them with the normal, what everyone else is doing.*

Based on the answers provided by the participants, it can be concluded that inclusive education can be seen as a child's right to education, regardless of his/her learning disability. Teachers have a clear understanding of what inclusive education is all about. The knowledge displayed by the participants was helpful, because before a teacher can implement inclusive education in various ways, it must first be understood.

**c) Awareness of policies for inclusive education**

The respondents were asked if they are awareness of policies for inclusive education. In order to determine different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education, it would be good to first see if they are aware of policies for inclusive education. These policies would be the guide for successful implementation. The following responses were noted:

**Teacher A:**

*Yes, South-Africa has adopted an inclusive education policy in order to address barriers to learning in the education system, however the implementation of this policy is hampered by the lack of teacher's skills and knowledge.*

**Teacher C:**

*No.*

**Teacher B:**

*I have heard of the SIAS policy, but other than that, not really.*

**Teacher D:**

*Yes, the Education White Paper 6.*



Based on the responses above, it can be concluded that teachers are not fully aware of inclusive education policies. All four participants responded with different policies, such as the SIAS policy and the White Paper 6. One teacher is not aware of any policies for inclusive education. Teacher D felt that the SIAS policy derives from the White Paper 6, meaning that the SIAS Policy is aimed at assisting the implementation of the Education White Paper 6. If teachers are not aware of inclusive education policies, it cannot be implemented successfully in the classroom, leading to learners not receiving adequate support according to their needs. Despite the development of an inclusive education policy, one of the most important issues that hampers the progress is the lack of teacher knowledge in adapting lessons to meet a variety of learning needs. Teachers are not encouraged to promote inclusive practice.

#### **d) Workshops**

Participants were asked if they attended workshops from the Department of Education or any other institution to better understand the process of inclusive education. The researcher asked this question in order to determine if attending workshops will equip teachers with the skills to learn different ways to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school. The participants answered the following:

**Teacher A:**

*No.*

**Teacher B:**

*No, I have not.*

**Teacher C:**

*Not from the Department, but when I was studying, my main subject was inclusive education.*

**Teacher D:**

*No, I did not, but most workshops are either too far from us or they get postponed or cancelled, so that is why.*

Teachers are not attending workshops to better their understanding of inclusive education, yet teachers are expected to implement the inclusive education policies in the classrooms. It can be concluded that teachers lack basic skills and training to ensure successful implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. The Department of Education should have workshops to equip teachers with the basic skills needed to provide support to learners in realistic settings, such as overcrowded classrooms. By not attending workshops, teachers are not trained how to value difference, involve parents meaningfully in the process of learning or moving from traditional structured, such as textbook based to instruction which tends to be cooperative and interactive. Poor budget planning could be a reason educators are not being trained. To understand, not only the needs of learners but also understand how to cater for those needs, teacher training is essential.

#### ***4.4.1.2 Various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following categories that were derived from the obtained data:

##### **a) Responsibility to implement inclusive education**

The respondents were asked to give their opinion of who is responsible to make sure that inclusive education policies are being implemented. The researcher asked this question to better understand the teachers' views in this regard. For inclusive education to be successful, teachers need to know who is responsible for the implementation. The participants answered as follows:

##### **Teacher A:**

*Teachers are this far increasingly responsible in my opinion.*

##### **Teacher B and Teacher C:**

*The Department of Education.*

**Teacher D:**

*I believe it is first the teacher's responsibility to enforce it in their classroom and that comes with the support of the SBST obviously, but I also do believe that it is the Government's responsibility to make sure that it is implemented and that we get the support that is needed, because I don't feel we always do.*

With the various responses it can be concluded that teachers are not sure who is responsible for the implementation of inclusive education. Some teachers believe it is the responsibility of the teachers themselves, while other teachers think it is the responsibility of the Department of Education. This confusion could be a reason for teachers failing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom. In order to move from policy to practice, there must be a clear understanding of the responsibilities of each role player.

**b) Factors that influences the successful implementation of inclusive education**

Participants were asked to name factors that influences the successful implementation of inclusive education. This would provide insight into the real struggles teachers face. Participants answered the following:

**Teacher B:**

*The overcrowded classrooms, smaller classes would be better controlled. Teachers being trained in special education which most are not and some teachers are not even qualified yet. And also having an assistant teacher who can assist learners with special needs. It makes it difficult because the educator needs to understand every child's strengths and their weaknesses so there is not always sufficient time, means and aids to do that so it is difficult.*

**Teacher A:**

*I think it will be co-teaching, special educator to teachers alongside a general education teacher and then also parallel teaching other support personal to work with a sub group of special education students in the classroom, also teaming up, an educator is teaming up with a support person and one or more general education teachers share the responsibilities of all students in the inclusive classroom.*

**Teacher C:**

*Definitely the limited time, the number of learners that we have in the classroom and then the amount of work that we need to cover.*

**Teacher D:**

*I think the sizes of our classrooms influences the implementation, as well as our knowledge and training in this field. I don't think that we are trained well enough to deal with the type of learners that we have in our classes. As much as there is a policy, it's is not realistic in our cases.*

It can be concluded that teachers are facing many challenges with regards to inclusive education. Factors that play a role include: overcrowded classrooms, limited time, lack of teacher training, lack of knowledge, limited learning aids and the overwhelming amount of work that must be completed. A rigid curriculum, in contrast to the inclusion policy, does not allow time for experimentation or the use of different teaching methods in a single lesson. This can be an enormous barrier to inclusion. The current situation demands that teachers be confident, capable and skilful to handle any situation in an inclusive set-up, without receiving proper training on how to achieve this.

**c) Challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in Gauteng classrooms**

Respondents were asked what challenges teachers are facing in implementing inclusion policies in Gauteng classrooms. This question will highlight the struggles that teachers encounter in the classroom in order to implement inclusive education. The participants answered as follows:

**Teacher A:**

*I have three. The first one would be lack of experience in an inclusive setting. Lack of experience dealing with a severe or profound disability and also shortage of teacher aids.*

**Teacher D:**

*Overcrowding of our classrooms, also our curriculum, the curriculum also poses a challenge, because there is too much to be done at once, and also support from the DBST.*

**Teacher B:**

*The lack of trained teachers, the large classrooms and also the lack to adapt the curriculum according to the learners needs. Limited teaching materials. We need to include all students in the activities, it is difficult due to the disabilities they have, not all activities can be based on a specific learner and they won't be able to complete it.*

**Teacher C:**

*We have a lot of work to cover so there is very limited time. The amount of work that we are doing and the classes are overcrowded as well, if the class is smaller, you have more control.*

Participants agree that teachers do face challenges to implement inclusive policies in their classrooms. Overcrowded classrooms are mentioned again as a major challenge for teachers. Other challenges include: limited time, lack of experience, shortage of teaching aids, inability to adapt the curriculum, lots of work to complete, lack of teacher training and limited support from the DBST. It can therefore be concluded that teachers are facing various challenges to implement inclusion policies in the classroom. Policy implementation challenges and the fact that teachers are already straining under large workloads and may resent the added responsibilities of coming up with different approaches for the same lessons and therefore also teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are also a challenge.

***4.4.1.3 Realistic implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following categories that were derived from the obtained data:

### **a) How to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms**

The researcher's first question was: How do you think teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng? This question was posed to the participants to understand how they implement inclusive education in their overcrowded classrooms. It will provide a better understanding of how teachers are providing support to learners in need when the classes are overcrowded. The participants responded as follow:

#### **Teacher A:**

*To keep everyone busy all the time, keep lessons short and be strategic a large class require a bigger learner independence.*

#### **Teacher B:**

*Firstly, one needs to acknowledge and respect the aspect of diversity amongst the learners. We need to know from the constitution that every child has a right to quality education and that is not always possible. Having a classroom assistant to assist the learners with their needs, the resources used are inclusive, it is not just based on gender or race. We include all resources.*

#### **Teacher C:**

*I think it is very hard to do. I struggle with it. Like I said we have those lower level activities and then a few one-on-one sessions, but it is very hard to do. I think it is actually not working.*

#### **Teacher D:**

*To be honest, I think they try their hardest, but I don't think that they can implement it in overcrowded classrooms. They don't even have the time to get to your children that aren't struggling, so how you get to the weak children or the gifted children.*

Based on the responses, it can be concluded that teachers do cater for inclusive education by providing lower level activities and individual support, but it is a big struggle. It is not easy to do and teachers admit that they struggle with it. The classrooms are overcrowded, making it difficult to provide individual support to all the learners who need it.

The second question was very similar to question one, but with more focus on how inclusive education is being used in the classroom. This question will allow for teachers to give a more detailed description of what they do in the classroom to cater for learners with barriers to learning. Participants were asked how they have used inclusive education in the classroom. Participants said:

**Teacher A:**

*All learners learn differently, in this principal of inclusive education, I break learners up into groups and spend more time with them individually, this is when differentiation takes place. I give them instructions to follow in stronger groups with stronger children so that they can assist them where they lack.*

**Teacher B:**

*I make use of lower level activities, which is curriculum differentiation. We give individual support, re-teaching a concept to individual learners, the buddy system where you pair a stronger learner with a weaker learner. We also try involving parents by sending home extra support work, but it is not always as successful taking the circumstances into consideration.*

**Teacher C:**

*Basically we just try to. For most learners who struggle, we have lower level activities and we do a little bit of one-on-one teaching when we have time.*

**Teacher D:**

*In my classroom I will use support, I support learners individually or use group support to help those who are struggling, referrals where you identify the learner's barrier and call the parents in to discuss a way forward or if they need an eye test, for example. Corrective teaching, lower level activities and curriculum differentiation.*

It can be concluded that teachers make use of grouping, a buddy system, lower level activities, re-teaching a concept, individual support, home support, referrals and corrective teaching to cater for learners with barriers to learning. Teachers are evidently trying very hard to

accommodate learners with barriers to learning, but it is not always possible to achieve the goals due to limited time, too many learners in one class and a vast curriculum.

**b) Activities that are differentiated in order to include all learning types**

Participants were asked to provide examples of activities that they differentiated in order to include all learning types. This question focuses on what teachers have to do in the classroom to accommodate all learning types in one single lesson. Participants replied:

**Teacher A:**

*The first one would be the literature circle where we discuss and organise learners into circles where they are being encouraged by the other learners to help them shape and form each other. This helps them to become creative thinkers and also help the teacher to listen to discussions and ask questions based on the discussions.*

**Teacher B:**

*The curriculum differentiation, the lower level activity. I usually say match a picture with the word to make it easier for them, instead of where they have to write the word out on their own or they can simply trace a word without writing it, so the answer is basically given.*

**Teacher C:**

*I think for the visual learner, I will have a video on the board so that they can see the story and maybe even the words as well, flashing so that they can read and see the pictures and to build their own picture. For the learners who are more audible, I would either read the story to them or you could use a radio where they read the story for them. For the learner who is more hands-on, I would try to, while the story is being read that they form a picture with puzzles or something, maybe one of those cloth boards, where they can stick the pictures on and build the story.*

**Teacher D:**

*English, when we do shared reading, the first set of questions will be circle the correct answer, then the next question will be true or false, this helps with the children that*



*struggle, it is easy questions that they will be able to do. Then we will go on to questions for the medium learning children and also at the bottom there will be two more difficult questions or high order questions for the gifted learners. If they have to write sentences with their spelling words, the lower level activity will be the spelling words and different words that make up the sentence, but it is crumpled up, so they just have to unjumble the sentence to write the sentences with their spelling words.*

Based on the responses, a lot of planning and resources are needed in order to cater for all learning types. Implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng schools is not realistically possible with the given time allocation and a rigid curriculum. With large classrooms, it's not always easy or possible to personalise lessons, but using a mixed learning approach throughout the lesson can help teachers cater to each type of learning style. The most important element is first recognising the differences in learners' learning and then incorporate multiple strategies within each lesson. By varying the types of activities, teachers should be able to cater for different learning styles and preferences and thus maximise opportunities for all our learners to learn, but this is time consuming and not easy in an overcrowded classroom with many learners who all learn in different ways.

### **c) Realistically implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school**

Participants were asked to respond to the following question: Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools? This question was asked to get a direct answer to the sub-objective of this study. Participants responded as follows:

#### **Teacher A:**

*I don't think so, so my answer would be, no. South Africa has not yet succeeded in constructing school system that lives up to the ideals and intentions of inclusion.*

#### **Teacher B:**

*No they are not. It is not always possible to minimize all the barriers and to maximise the participation from everybody and it not always possible to adapt the structures system to fit everybody's needs and their barriers.*

**Teacher C:**

*No, I don't think so.*

**Teacher D:**

*No, they are not. They are not realistic at all. They don't consider the sizes of our classrooms and how much the children need our attention and our help and our support, and you can't give to 40-50 learners in every subject, in every concept throughout the day.*

All participants agreed and it can be concluded that inclusive education policies are not realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools. The vision of inclusion is that all children would be assisted in the regular classroom with children their own age. The notion is that these schools would be restructured so that they are supportive, rich in resources, nurturing and meet the needs of all the children. Taking into account the 40-50 learners in one classroom, it is most definitely not realistic to support all the needs of all the learners.

#### ***4.4.1.4 The needs of inclusive learners in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following categories that were derived from the obtained data:

##### **a) Needs of learners**

Participants were asked if the needs of learners are truly met in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng. The researcher asked this question to gain an understanding of the realism of inclusive education and if learners truly benefit from it. The participants answered:

**Teacher A:**

*Honestly, no. Overcrowding significantly affect effective teaching and learning and also effect negatively on the performance of learners being a major factor.*

**Teacher B:**

*No, I don't think so.*

**Teacher C:**

*No.*

**Teacher D:**

*No they are not. Not even the children that don't have barriers to learning, their needs aren't met either. So, how do we meet the needs of the other learners?*

It can be concluded based on all the statements above that the needs of learners are not truly met in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng. The reality is that teachers need to provide different instruction for different learners, based on their learning style, and you can't have all types of instruction happening in the same place at the same time, especially in an overcrowded setting.

**b) Workshops on how to successfully implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms**

Participants were asked if they thought teachers would benefit from attending appropriate workshops on how to successfully implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms. The reason this question was asked was to determine if workshops would be beneficial for teachers and in return lead to catering for the needs of learners in overcrowded classrooms. The responses included:

**Teacher A:**

*No, teacher training does not appear to be adequately addressing the needs resulting in stress for the teachers and a lack of progress on learners with disabilities.*

**Teacher B:**

*Yes, most definitely. I think we are always capable of learning something and even develop yourself.*

**Teacher C:**

*Yes.*

**Teacher D:**

*Yes, and no. I don't think that they would benefit because there are other factors that are influencing it, so as much as we can train on inclusive education, if we come back to the school and the classrooms are overcrowded and the curriculum is pressurising us the whole time, how do you implement it on a realistic ground level. It can help us understand better, but it cannot help us implement it realistically.*

Participants have mixed views on attending workshops. Some teachers felt that it would benefit them to attend workshops, while other teachers did not see the need as the realities in the classroom, such as overcrowded classrooms and curriculum overloading, are not considered when workshop are presented. The workshops will improve their understanding of inclusive education, but not necessarily the practical part of how to provide support to learners in need in an overcrowded classroom.

**c) Effective implementation of inclusive education**

Participants were asked to share their thoughts about what they think can be done to ensure effective implementation of inclusive education. This question was asked to find out the views of teachers on how to improve the inclusive policies to ensure that the needs of learners are truly met in the classroom. Participants replied:

**Teacher A:**

*Planning and then school reviews. Training and supporting of all teachers in inclusive practices, not just specialised once and supporting school leadership to enact an inclusive vision for their school.*

**Teacher B:**

*One must ensure that every child is included, every child is unique and will develop on their own pace so it is not about treating all children in exactly the same way, but treating each child fairly and paying attention to their individual interests and needs. We must include and support every child, ensure that every child is capable of participating in activities.*

**Teacher C:**

*In my main subject, they taught us all the different types of learning difficulties, but they didn't really teach us how to work with that child. So you know that this child has this disability, but you don't know what to do with it, so I think they need to show us how to do it.*

**Teacher D:**

*The first thing is the overcrowding classrooms, classrooms are too big. There are too many learners for even normal teaching to take place. The second thing is parental support as well, especially in our community, we can identify a child with a barrier to learning within the first week of school, but for the parents to accept that and to help and support us, work together with us, because of stigmatisation of children with barriers to learning, they think that my child is stupid, but we are just trying to work with them to get the help. And also, the curriculum, I think the curriculum is too fast pace, and there is too much work that must be completed, that you don't get the time to do one-on-one or support or individual attention. And more support from the DBST.*

Based on the responses it can be concluded that teachers need training on how to implement inclusive education in their classrooms. Teachers need to be shown how to provide support to learners in real classrooms with real struggles, with practical examples in a realistic school setting. Teachers feel that the curriculum should be adapted to make provision for support as the curriculum is too fast paced and hampers the process of providing appropriate support to learners.

**4.4.1.5 Summary**

After analysing the data collected during the individual interviews, it is clear that teachers need skills and training to implement inclusive education successfully in their classrooms. The overcrowded classrooms hamper the inclusive education process, as well as the fast curriculum demands. Teachers find it very difficult to provide support to learners with needs in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Teachers did not attend appropriate workshops with practical examples on how to provide inclusive education in an overcrowded classroom. The majority of the teachers who participated in this study voiced a need for changes in public schools in Gauteng

in order to meet the needs of learners with barriers to learning. Teachers are not confident to administer inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng due to lack of training, skills and knowledge about the inclusive policies. Teachers are trying very hard to accommodate learners, with the limited knowledge about the topic, but it is not always possible to achieve inclusion due to limited time and there are just too many learners in one class. The curriculum lacks the required flexibility to cater for the needs of learners with barriers to learning. The relationship between policy and practice is generally weak, meaning that the challenges in practical inclusive education is the implementation difficulties.

The implementation of inclusive education requires dedication and willingness on part of all stakeholders, especially educators. Every educator must be aware of the concept of inclusion. There is a need to develop support systems for teachers. It can also be concluded that knowledge and skills about inclusive education could empower them as professionals.

#### **4.5 Data obtained from the focus group interview**

The data obtained from the interviews held with the focus group was carefully transcribed. The transcriptions were used to organise the data into categories and themes according to the sub-objectives of the study. During the focus group interview, participants had to answer and discuss ten questions. The data is presented in terms of quoting responses from the focus group and then interpreting the questions.

##### ***4.5.1 Different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following questions that were asked during the focus group interviews.

**Researcher: “*Today’s topic is policy and law on inclusive education. What are your general views about it?*”**

The focus group was prompted about their views about what inclusive education policies entail. For teachers to implement inclusive education in different ways, teachers must first understand what inclusive education is all about. Focus group participants responded as follows:

**Teacher B:**

*Policies is a good thing, it sets the standards and it is like rules, so it is rules that you need to follow. And without rules one will not have any guidance and know what is expected of you.*

**Teacher D:**

*I think it is good to have the rules and policies to guide you, but they also aren't very realistic or practical, that is what I feel about them.*

**Teacher A:**

*I think it can also be regarded as part of why we struggle in violation on human rights and against discrimination.*

According to the statements made above, teachers do not always have a positive view on policies and law with regards to inclusive education. Participants agreed that rules can guide you, but they are not practical in the classroom.

**Researcher: “How familiar are you with policy and law on inclusive education?”**

This question was asked to find out if teachers are familiar with policy and law on inclusive education, as they need to implement this on a daily basis in their classrooms. Participants replied:

**Teacher D:**

*I would say that I am not that familiar with it, I read through it and I know about them, but I am not that familiar with the rules and policies.*

**Teacher A:**

*I am not familiar at all.*

**Teacher B:**

*We did not have any training.*

It can be concluded that teachers are not familiar with policies and law on inclusive education. Teachers also did not receive any training to better their knowledge and equip them with the skills needed to implement inclusive education in their classrooms. Teachers require more

preservice training on the expectations and methods of working with learners who experience barriers to learning and to better familiarise themselves with policy and law on inclusive education.

#### ***4.5.2 Various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following questions that were asked during the focus group interviews.

**Researcher:** *“What are specific issues, concerns or problems you’ve faced implementing inclusive education in your classroom?”*

The researcher included this question to highlight the challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusive policies in the classroom. It allowed participants to share their own personal experiences with the researcher. Participants replied as follows:

**Teacher D:**

*I would say the problem that I face with inclusive education is overcrowding in the classrooms, lack of support from parents, lack of support from DBST, if it is escalated then you can wait years to get help or support from them with regards to that. Trying to set assessments or worksheets for 40 or 45 different children’s needs, it is impossible.*

**Teacher C:**

*I agree, there is a lot of work that has to be covered and then you neglect the child that’s actually falling behind, I would say, that is trying to keep up.*

**Teacher B:**

*It is also very difficult in an overcrowded classroom to meet every learner’s needs. We only focus on strengths and we tend to neglect weaknesses. Some educators aren’t qualified to address a specific special need learner. It’s not just special needs there is language barriers, uninvolved parents, not all teachers have teaching assistants in their classes to assist with that. It is just lack of resources.*



**Teacher A:**

*I agree with Teacher B, and also I think that most of the learners are diverse, and there are many challenges that comes with that.*

Teachers are overwhelmed in the classrooms, not only with curriculum demands, but also trying to meet the needs of all the learners in an overcrowded classroom. Lack of parent involvement and limited support from the DBST also influences the learning process negatively. Teachers are not qualified to address some of the learning barriers that learners experience.

#### ***4.5.3 Realistic implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school***

This objective will now be discussed according to the following questions that were asked during the focus group interviews.

**Researcher: “Do you think that inclusive education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools and why?”**

This question is straight to the point and should clearly indicate if education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools. The participants were very fast to answer the following:

**Teacher A:**

*No, too many learners in one class.*

**Teacher B:**

*No, it is not.*

**Teacher C:**

*No, they don't consider the sizes of our classrooms.*

**Teacher D:**

*No, I think teachers try their hardest, but I don't think that they can implement it in overcrowded classrooms.*

It can be concluded, based on the responses above, that education policies are not realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools.

**Researcher: “Do inclusive policies give practical examples of how to implement inclusive education in an overcrowded classroom successfully?”**

In order to further see if education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms, the question focused on practical examples in the inclusive policy regarding implementation. Participants replied:

**Teacher B:**

*Practical examples are not given, definitely not.*

**Teacher D:**

*Definitely not practical examples. I feel that the people who wrote the policies, haven't been in overcrowded classrooms to understand it.*

**Teacher B:**

*They don't even give, like examples, really. They think it can work, but in practise it doesn't work.*

It can be concluded that inclusive policies do not provide practical examples of how to implement inclusive education in an overcrowded classroom successfully. This is very concerning, as teachers are expected to support learners with barriers to learning daily, without being given the proper guidance and instruction on how to do it.

**Researcher: “In your opinion, what factors does the policy on inclusive education, such as the SIAS document, not address in terms of successful implementation in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng?”**

This question refers to factors that teachers feel should have been added to the inclusive policy to make it more realistic to implement in overcrowded classrooms. Participants responded by saying:

**Teacher D:**

*Firstly, the fact that the classrooms are overcrowded, that there are too many children for us to support. I think one of the other things that they don't address, is especially, in Gauteng and our community is the lack of parental support and also that our parents are in denial, because there is a stigmatisation about children with barriers to learning, as soon as you say you would like the child to be assessed, maybe just for an eye or a hearing test, then they automatically think there is something wrong with their child, they are stupid, you want my child to go to a stupid school, that is the comments that we get from the parents when we are just trying to help them. We don't have parental support from majority of our parents.*

**Teacher B:**

*Mostly, with the barriers, they tend to have behavioural problems and those are not addressed, the system is failing us, because they don't allow for us to remove that learner, everybody has the right to education still, it's in the constitution, so that learner is not allowed to be removed, or be taught in a different space, everybody must be given a fair chance, it is just disadvantaging everybody else.*

**Teacher D:** *It is affecting all the other learners in the class, because those disruptions stop them from learning.*

Teachers mentioned that the policy does not address behavioural problems. There should be clear guidance on how to provide support to learners, while some learners are not listening or following rules that are causing disruptions during lessons. The overcrowded classes are not included; teachers need guidance on how to implement inclusive education with a large number of learners in a classroom. Another factor that is omitted from the inclusive policy is how to deal with limited parental involvement, as parents are not always involved and expect the support to purely come from the teacher. Support is not provided at home.

**4.5.4 The needs of inclusive learners in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng**

This objective will now be discussed according to the following questions that were asked during the focus group interviews.

**Researcher: “What practical examples do you use in your classroom to ensure that learners’ needs are met?”**

The researcher included this question for the purpose of finding out what teachers are doing in the classrooms to meet the needs of learners. Responses included:

**Teacher D:**

*The examples that I try to implement is the curriculum differentiation, lower level activities, one-on-one support, peer assistance, group support, sending support and resources home for the parents that do assist at home, referring learners, corrective teaching. It is so time consuming, you don’t get to every child every day, when you are trying to support them.*

**Teacher B:**

*Re-teaching a concept several times, lower level activities, maybe tracing the words or matching pictures to words. I also think in a sense we disadvantage the stronger learners, as they need to support someone else, so they are also falling behind instead of giving them something more challenging, so that they can maybe challenge themselves a little bit.*

**Teacher C:**

*Practical, more practical hands-on, where they count with physical objects.*

**Teacher A:**

*Curriculum differentiation and grouping them with a stronger learner, so that the stronger learner can assist the weaker learner.*

Teachers are able to meet the needs of some learners, but at a cost of disadvantaging stronger learners in the classroom. It is a time consuming task and requires a lot of practical activities and re-teaching. There is no time to challenge the gifted learners as the focus is always on supporting the weaker learners.

**Researcher: *What positive experiences have you had with regards to any policy on inclusive education?***

This question was added to obtain information about teachers' experience with inclusive education to ensure that the needs of learners are met in the classroom. The following was discussed:

**Teacher D:**

*I would say I didn't have any positive experiences with it, I don't find them realistic or practical or helpful in our situations, so I wouldn't say that I had any positive experiences.*

**Teacher B:**

*At the moment, I think it is just more work and you feel more overwhelmed and more confused even, so also not very positive.*

**Teacher C:**

*I also don't have any positive, none!*

From the comments made by the respondents, it is evident that teachers do not have any positive experiences with inclusive education policies. This leads to the needs of learners not being met in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. If teachers do not have a positive experience with the inclusion policy, their attitude towards it will not be positive.

**Researcher: *“What changes would you recommend making to the inclusive education policy?”***

The next question gave the respondents opportunity to express their views on the changes they would make to ensure that the needs of learners are met when implementing the inclusion policies. Participants replied:

**Teacher A:**

*I'd use a behavioural management plan and also I would say you need to know all your students and learner that you have in your class with a behavioural problem so that you*

*can work on that individual learner's behaviour. That will help in the end of the day, not much, but it will assist you.*

**Teacher D:**

*I think the classroom sizes needs to be changes that we can have fewer learners so that we can support the once that need support and challenge the gifted learners, because we do neglect them. And the curriculum must change, it is too fast paced and there is too much expected from teachers and learners with regards to the work and assessments that you don't have time.*

**Teacher B:**

*Maybe before enrolling a learner into a school, there can be some form of a baseline assessment, so that the whole process is a bit faster for placing them into the correct school, not just in a normal school where he going to be falling more and more behind. ILS schools got therapists and it is not at an extra cost. Most of our parents don't even have medical aid, so the ILS school route would be best for the child's needs, not to just disadvantage a learner even further by placing him in an overcrowded government school.*

**Teacher D:**

*I understand what they want with inclusive education, but all children with barriers to learning are in mainstream schools, but realistically it is not working at all, it is not fair on the children or the children that don't have barriers to learning. I believe that children with barriers to learning should be in a school that is suited for their needs that have specialists on the premises that can assist them, because in mainstream schools they are getting lost and they are falling even further behind, because we don't have the training to help them the way they need to be helped.*

From the above comments, teachers would make various changes to the inclusive policies. Teachers would add a section on how to deal with learners with behavioural problems, while providing inclusive education to other learners in the classroom. The classroom sizes need to be smaller and the curriculum needs to be adapted to be more flexible and provide more time

for support. The placement process for learners with barriers to learning who should attend special schools should improve and be faster.

#### **4.5.5 Summary**

After the group interview, I was very overwhelmed with the fact that the participants could not name one positive experience with regards to inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Teachers are frustrated with a system that must be implemented, but the same system is failing the teaching and learning in the classrooms. The expectations on inclusive policies are unrealistic and, as one participant stated, "*It is impossible*". Teachers do not always have a positive view on policies and law with regards to inclusive education, because they are faced with real challenges in the classrooms on a daily basis.

Educators need knowledge and skills for teaching diversity in the classroom. Moreover, teachers need structured support from the wider community, including parents and DBST in order to meet the needs of all learners. In order to support educators to implement the inclusive education policy, many changes need to be made to the current education system. The classroom sizes must be considered, as well as the behaviour concerns of too many learners in a class. Parents need to be educated on how to be involved parents, supporting at home and working with the teachers to ensure that learners reach their full potential. The curriculum must also be adapted to be inclusive friendly.

### **4.6 Data obtained from document analysis**

#### **4.6.1 Introduction**

Data was collected from documents as described by the participants during the focus group interview and the individual interviews, namely the White Paper 6 and the SIAS Policy. For this section two documents were carefully studied with the research questions guiding the analysis. These two policies mentioned by the participants were the only documents that they were aware of that focus on inclusive education. According to Strydom and Delport (2005) documentary analysis is generally described as an analysis of written materials that contain information about the topic under investigation.

#### **4.6.2 The White Paper 6**

In South Africa, inclusive education as outlined in Education White Paper 6 (2001) is about:

- transformation of an education system which has previously been divided into “special education” and “mainstream education” into one integrated system which embraces equity and quality;
- acceptance of equal rights for all learners and social justice; and
- transforming the education system to effectively respond to and support learners, parents and communities by promoting the removal of barriers to learning and participation in that education system in an incremental manner.

I was curious about the transformation process of an education system, so I analysed the content of a manual called: “Implementing White Paper 6: Inclusive Learning Programmes Participant’s Manual, Version Two July 2007” (DoE 2007). I focused on the following sections to get a better understanding of the implementation of the White Paper 6:

Section 1: What are the principles of inclusive education?

Section 2: How can I manage and adapt the classroom to include all children?

Section 3: How can I differentiate the curriculum and my teaching methods to include all children?

Section 4: How can the whole system help me to include all children?

#### **4.6.3 The principles of inclusive education**

In 1997, Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and Curriculum 2005 (C2005) were phased into the Foundation Phase. Teachers were trained and started to implement these new strategies in their classrooms. The National Department of Education set up a Review Committee to make things easier and streamline the curriculum for teachers who were trying to implement the new strategies, and so a simpler curriculum was developed, called the Revised National Curriculum Statement, now called the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE 2001). The NCS covers all schooling from Grade R to Grade 12.



The NCS (DoE 2001) remains firmly based on OBE principles and practices and go by five key principles:

1. Social Justice, a Healthy Environment, Human Rights and Inclusivity.

*“This principle supports the values of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This principle ensures that the NCS addresses the goals for social transformation, as set out in South Africa’s Constitution. In particular, this principle emphasises the importance of human rights, social justice and inclusivity. In doing this the curriculum is sensitive to issues of poverty, inequality, race, gender, age, disability and challenges such as HIV/AIDS. You will find these issues addressed in all Learning Areas. However, this principle does not only address immediate social issues, it also addresses longer term environmental, development and sustainability issues. It aims to ensure that South Africa’s natural resources will be used wisely, so that all South Africans, and future generations, will have access to a healthy environment, clean air, water and food. This principle encourages educators and learners to explore the relationships between human rights, a healthy environment, social justice and inclusivity. For example, learners may explore the social justice effects of polluted air, or they may explore the issues of exclusion that are associated with human rights violations. All Learning Areas have addressed human rights, social justice, a healthy environment and inclusivity through the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. This principle was included to ensure that the process of learning is seen to be as important as the content.”*

2. Outcomes-based education.

*“The Critical and Developmental Outcomes and the unique features of the Learning Areas were used as the departure point, and a ‘design down’ approach was used to identify the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. This means that all Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards work towards enabling learners to achieve the Critical and Developmental Outcomes. Adopting an outcomes-based approach also allows for creativity and innovation on the part of teachers, who can interpret the outcomes differently in different contexts. Different methods can be used to achieve the same outcomes. Outcomes-based education accommodates and responds to diversity. The outcomes-based approach also allows all learners to develop and achieve to their maximum ability, and allows for participation in learning. It encourages active learning approaches.”*

3. A high level of skills and knowledge for all.

*“This principle establishes an expectation that all learners will be offered opportunities to develop a high level of knowledge and skills. This principle was included to ensure that educators aim to provide for high quality education for all learners.”*

4. Clarity and accessibility.

*“This principle was included to ensure that all educators in South Africa can use the NCS easily. The NCS has clear design features. It is available in all official languages and will be available in Braille.”*

5. Progression and integration.

*“This principle ensures that the curriculum sets out progressively more demanding, deeper and broader expectations of learners. Learning gets progressively more complex from grade to grade, and from phase to phase. Integration is necessary to ensure that learners experience the Learning Areas as being linked and related. This allows for expanded opportunities for learning.”*

These principles are reflected in the following quote taken from the National Curriculum Statements document: “The curriculum can play a vital role in creating awareness of the relationship between human rights, a healthy environment, social justice and inclusivity. In some countries this is done through subjects such as civics. The Revised National Curriculum Statement has tried to ensure that all Learning Area Statements reflect the principles and practices of social justice, respect for the environment and human rights as defined in the Constitution. In particular, the curriculum attempts to be sensitive to issues of poverty, inequality, race, gender, age, disability, and such challenges as HIV/AIDS. The Revised National Curriculum Statement adopts an inclusive approach by specifying minimum requirements for all learners. The special educational, social, emotional and physical needs of learners will be addressed in the design and development of appropriate Learning Programmes.”

#### **4.6.4 Manage and adapt the classroom to include all learners**

This section included physical changes teachers can make in the classroom to include all children by ensuring that the environment is accessible and comfortable. Some examples

included putting in ramps, clearing space for wheelchairs, ensure good lighting in the classroom to view facial expressions and lip movements, include visual access to information and seating arrangements in the classroom.

#### ***4.6.5 Differentiating the curriculum to include all learners***

In this section the focus was on three levels of planning, namely: learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans to ensure that the curriculum is differentiated for inclusion. Teachers need to understand the purpose of a learning programme and of the different parts of it in order to differentiate the curriculum successfully. To set a learning programme, the following needs to be adhered to, as set out in the NCS (DoE 2001):

- *The sequence of the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards across the phase. This is to make sure that there is a coherent teaching, learning and assessment programme and to show progression from grade to grade.*
- *The knowledge and concepts which are selected to attain the learning outcomes*
- *The context that ensures that teaching and learning is appropriate to the needs of the community, school and classroom.*
- *The resources that are needed.*

Work schedules are developed from the learning programmes. They are much more comprehensive and demonstrate how teaching, learning and assessment will be sequenced and paced in a specific grade. As detailed as the work schedules are, at this point, however, planning is not yet thorough enough to offer information on exactly what the learners and the teacher will be doing in each lesson, each week. This is where the lesson plan comes in.

The lesson plan is developed from the work schedule and provides a detailed structure for teaching, learning and assessment activities. Teachers prepare their own lesson plans as subject heads and include support work for teaching, learning and assessment in their particular subject. This process of making sure that your learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans meet the needs of all your learners is called curriculum differentiation.

Curriculum differentiation requires teachers to take different actions by providing a range of activities to accommodate the different learning styles. According to the *Guidelines for Inclusive*

*Learning Programmes* (DoE 2005), you will find the following ideas for differentiating curriculum content:

- *Remember that some learners coming from different backgrounds may respond differently to a specific text.*
- *Even if some of them have not fully mastered English as the language of learning and teaching, they may still understand the key concepts.*
- *The text may not be of interest to them and this may affect their behaviour during the activity.*
- *Certain learners can have the skill of communicating without necessarily having mastered the language.*
- *The level of abstract content can be reduced.*
- *Setting a substitute task of similar scope and demand.*
- *Replacing one task with a task of a different kind.*
- *A more challenging or complex text can be selected for learners who need expanded opportunities.*
- *Shorten the tasks.*
- *Select texts and books that are culture sensitive.*
- *Provide reading materials that will interest learners and that is not too linguistically difficult to read.*

Teaching strategies are the ways in which teachers present content and encourage skills development. To reach all learners, teachers have to include various strategies in the classroom to ensure that the needs of learners are met.

#### **4.6.6 Understanding the role of structures in curriculum differentiation**

Transformation is a process that requires time and continuous support from great management structures. The school principal, the SGB and the SMT have to make sure that teachers understand and gain knowledge of inclusive education in order for the school to be more inclusive. An inclusive school is a physical place for learners that has a positive learning atmosphere, and there is participation and shared responsibility amongst all stakeholders of the school. Materials and resources must be well maintained. The implementation of successful

inclusion education demands a network of support, where staff support each other and work together to ensure that the learners receive the quality education that they deserve.

#### ***4.6.7 National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)***

The inclusive policy that most participants are aware of is the SIAS policy (DoE 2008). As discussed in chapter two, the SAIS policy is aimed at improving access to quality education for vulnerable learners who experience barriers to learning, including learners in ordinary and special schools. The researcher studied the content of the policy and there are three stages of the SIAS policy that are very important in order for the policy to work, namely:

##### **STAGE 1:** The initial screening guided by the learner profile

This is where the teacher screens all learner's admission information and records findings in the learner profile. This is done for teachers to know their learners.

##### **STAGE 2:** Identifying and addressing barriers to learning and development at school level

Once a learner is identified as being vulnerable, the teacher should formulate a reviewable intervention plan and communicate this information with the parents. If the learner needs further support, the teacher must complete the Support Needs Assessment Form 1 (SNA 1) and involve the School Based Support Team (SBST) to develop an individual support plan (ISP) for the learner by making use of the SNA Form 2 for this purpose. If the learner requires a higher level of support, the District Based Support Team (DBST) is approached.

##### **STAGE 3:** Identifying and addressing barriers to learning at district level

It is the role of the DBST to develop a support plan for the learner, based on the information received from the teacher and the SBST. This is where the SNA 3 form is completed. The support plan should include resources, training, counselling and mentoring of teachers and parents and monitoring the support received. If there is no success, the learner is considered for placement at an appropriate school. All decisions made about the placement of a learner have to be done in consultation with the parents.

These three stages are vital for the successful implementation of the SIAS policy. Together with the stages, teacher training is needed for the SIAS policy to work effectively for the benefit of all children experiencing barriers to learning. Teachers need to be familiar with the policy to be able to implement the process successfully. This will require consistent training and support beyond the initial orientation. Based on the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews, it is clear that teachers are not being trained and therefore cannot build their knowledge to cater for learners with barriers, especially in overcrowded classrooms.

#### **4.6.8 Summary**

After analysing the White Paper 6 and the SIAS policy, it was noted that the South African education system is trying to transform into a system which encourage equity and quality to all learners. It also acknowledges that children have equal rights to education. The education system has not transformed successfully, due to the continuous training that is needed for teachers to not only familiarise themselves with the policies, but also implement the policy content with confidence and knowledge in order to cater for all the needs of learners. Overcrowded classrooms do not allow for inclusive education to be effective. Teachers are expected, according to the policies, to identify learners with barriers to learning, then manage and adapt the classroom to include all learners, followed by differentiating the curriculum to include all learners by providing a range of activities to accommodate the different learning styles. All this must be implemented in overcrowded classrooms with behaviour problems, lack of resources and not being trained on inclusive education implementation.

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter explained the research process and the data collection methods used. The positive aspects as well as the challenges the researcher experienced during the data collection process were described. The researcher made use of a questionnaire to gather biographical data of the participants. This was followed by semi-structures interviews to gain an understanding of educators' and learners' challenges regarding inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms. After the semi-structured interviews with teachers, the researcher conducted a group interview with the participants to analyse the data and interpret it to answer the research question: How do educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng? Lastly, the researcher analysed

documents with the focus on how policies are implemented within the school to accommodate inclusive education in an overcrowded public school in Gauteng. The next chapter will present the summary and findings. It will also include recommendations and conclusions based on the data analysis of this research.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS TO THE STUDY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter presented, analysed and discussed the obtained data through the individual interviews, the focus group discussion and document analysis. The purpose of the study was to highlight real struggles learners and teachers experience every day. The main aim of this study was to determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng Province. The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the research study, highlight the research findings and discuss the recommendations to improve the current inclusive education policies and implementation procedures. This chapter will also provide recommendations for future research.

### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

This study was motivated by the need to improve inclusive education policies and law to successfully implement inclusion in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng, in order for teachers and learners to benefit from the education system. Chapter one provided an introductory of the research study and provided background information regarding inclusive education policies (cf.par.1.1). The rationale for the study (cf.par.1.2) provided the key reasons to conduct a study that explores how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning.

This research question was divided into four sub-questions (cf. par.1.3.1):

- What challenges are teachers facing in implementing inclusion policies in Gauteng classrooms?
- How do teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?
- Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school?
- Are the needs of inclusive learners truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?

The following objectives were derived from this aim (cf.par.1.3.2):



- explore various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom;
- determine different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school;
- establish if inclusive education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a Gauteng public school; and
- determine if the needs of learners are truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng.

A short discussion was provided of the research design (cf.par.1.5.1), research approach (cf.par.1.5.2), population and sampling (cf.par.1.5.3), instrumentation and data collection techniques, which included semi-structured interviews, focus group and document analysis (cf.par.1.5.4). This was followed by the data analysis procedure, interpretation and presentation (cf.par.1.5.5). The trustworthiness of the study was then discussed (cf.par.1.6). This chapter also discussed the research ethics/ethical considerations (cf.par.1.7) and limitations of the study (cf.par.1.8). Lastly, the definition of key concepts was highlighted (cf.par.1.9). The key concepts included, inclusive education: Education that includes all learners by ensuring access to quality education for all learners by meeting their diverse needs. It is providing opportunities for learners with disabilities to learn in general education classrooms (cf.par.1.9.1) and overcrowded classrooms: Overcrowded classrooms do not only affect learners' performance, but the teachers are facing different problems such as discipline concerns, stress and poor health. A classroom in which the number of learners exceeds the optimum level such that it causes hindrance to the teaching- learning process does not create an environment conducive to learning (cf.par.1.9.2).

Chapter two provided the literature review that focused on getting insight into inclusive education policies (cf.par.2.3) that ensure learners receive education according to their individual needs, followed by the effect of education policy and law on inclusive education (cf.par.2.5). This chapter also explored the challenges educators experience to enforce inclusion in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng (cf.par.2.6), which include: Lack of teacher training and skills (cf.par.2.6.1), lack of confidence (cf.par.2.6.2), large number of learners in classes (cf.par.2.6.3), curriculum and curriculum differentiation (cf.par.2.6.4), teachers' attitudes towards inclusion (cf.par.2.6.5), funding (cf.par.2.6.6), parental involvement

(cf.par.2.6.7) and parents in denial (cf.par.2.6.8). The chapter concluded that South Africa's inclusive education system is in crisis. Various sections of legislation and policy guidelines consider an inclusive education system, but these policies are just not practical in an overcrowded classroom. The major challenge faced by teachers is the implementation of inclusion due to lack of teacher training, limited knowledge about inclusion and lack of skills to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms (cf.par.2.7).

Chapter three explained the research approach and research methodology that was used in the study (cf.par.3.3). The population of the study was clarified (cf.par.3.4.1). It included educators who must provide inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. In this chapter, sampling of the study was also discussed (cf.par.3.4.2). The sampling consisted of teachers with the highest number of learners in the class to gain in-depth information on their experiences and skills. This was followed by the sampling techniques used in the study (cf.par.3.4.3). Instrumentation was presented (cf.par.3.5). It included semi-structured interviews (cf.par.3.5.1.1), a questionnaire to gain biographical data of the participants (cf.par.3.5.1.2), a focus group discussion (cf.par.3.5.1.3) and document analysis (cf.par.3.5.1.4). This chapter also explained the ethical considerations of the study (cf.par.3.6), data analysis and presentation (cf.par.3.7), followed by a full explanation of the trustworthiness of the study (cf.par.3.8). This chapter concluded with an overview of the research methodology and design that was used in this study (cf.par.3.9).

Chapter four outlined the presentation, analysis and discussion of the obtained data through the individual interviews, the focus group discussion and document analysis that was done during the research study. It mentioned challenges experienced during the research process (cf.par.4.2.3), as well as positive aspects (cf.par.4.2.4). The biographical data of the participants was presented (cf.par.4.3) and concluded that teachers with different ages, different levels of education and different years of teaching experience all face the same challenges in the classroom (cf.par.4.3.8). Thereafter, data obtained from the semi-structured individual interviews were presented.

The transcriptions were used to organise the data into categories and themes according to the sub-objectives of the study (cf.par.4.4). This was followed by the presentation of data obtained from the focus group interviews by also organising the data into categories and themes according to the sub-objectives of the study (cf.par.4.4.2). This followed an overview of the

document analysis, where the focus was on two policy documents as mentioned by the participants, namely the White Paper 6 and the SIAS policy. The content of these two policies was analysed (cf.par.4.4.3). This chapter concluded with an overview of the research process and the data collection methods (cf.par.4.5).

Chapter five presents a summary of the study. It also presents the findings of the study by presenting data according to the sub-aims that were outlined in chapter one. The chapter will conclude by making recommendations to improve the current inclusive education policies and provide appropriate recommendations for future research.

## **5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY**

### **5.3.1 Introduction**

The findings that will be discussed below are based on the data that was analysed and interpreted. The findings of the study will be discussed according to the four sub-aims mentioned above.

### **5.3.2. Findings with regard to research sub-aim one: Different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school**

This study revealed that South Africa is following an inclusive education policy, but teachers are not confident to administer inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Teachers are not familiar with the inclusive policies and not all teachers view inclusive education as part of their daily routine. Inclusion is also not yet part of teachers' language when speaking about their daily learning and teaching experiences. Because South Africa is moving towards an inclusive education system, it is imperative for a teacher to have a sound understanding of inclusive education. This study revealed that teachers do not have a collective understanding about inclusion (cf.par.4.4.1.a). Teachers do understand what inclusive education is all about, but they are not fully aware of inclusive education policies (cf.par.4.4.1.b). One of the most important issues that hinders the development of inclusive education is the lack of teacher knowledge in adapting lessons to meet a variety of learning needs. Teachers are not encouraged to promote inclusive practice (cf.par.4.4.1.c). They are not attending workshops or

training sessions to better their understanding of different ways that teachers can implement inclusive education, yet teachers are expected to implement the inclusive education policies in the classrooms (cf.par.4.4.1.d). Teachers do not have a positive view on policies and law with regards to inclusive education, because it is not practical in overcrowded classrooms.

**Finding 1: South Africa is moving towards an education system of inclusive education, but teachers are not familiar with the content of inclusive policies, leading to lack of knowledge and confidence to implement inclusive education in different ways in overcrowded classroom. Teachers need training to equip them with the skills and learn different ways to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school. Appropriate training will also change teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Inclusive education does not yet form part of teachers' language when speaking about their daily learning and teaching experiences. It is of outmost importance that teachers have a sound understanding of inclusive education policies in order to implement it successfully in the classroom.**

### **5.3.3. Findings with regard to research sub-aim two: Various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom**

This study revealed that teachers are facing many challenges to implement inclusive education policies in the classroom. There was confusion amongst teachers about who is responsible for the implementation of inclusive education. Some teachers believe it is the responsibility of the teachers themselves, while other teachers consider it to be the responsibility of the Department of Education. In order to move from policy to practice, there must be a clear understanding of the responsibilities of each role player (cf.par.4.4.1.2a). Factors that influence the successful implementation of inclusive education include: overcrowded classrooms, limited time to provide support, lack of teacher training, lack of knowledge about inclusive education, limited learning and teaching aids and the overwhelming amount of work that must be completed. A rigid curriculum, in contrast to the inclusion policy, does not allow time for experimentation or the use of different teaching methods in a single lesson. The current situation demands that teachers be confident, capable and skilful to handle any situation in an inclusive setup, without receiving proper training on how to achieve this (cf.par.4.4.1.2b). Limited support from the

DBST is another challenge that is frustrating to teachers. Teachers are already straining under large workloads and may resent the added responsibilities of coming up with different approaches for the same lessons, therefore teachers' attitudes towards inclusion is also a challenge (cf.par.4.4.1.2c). Lack of parent involvement can also influence the learning process negatively. Teachers will prepare work for home support, but then it does not get done at home. The pressure is solely on teachers to provide support to learners who experience barriers to learning (cf.par.4.4.2.2).

**Finding 2: The inclusive education policy is adding additional stress and pressure on teachers to perform duties that they have not been trained for. Teachers are not confident with providing inclusive education due to lack of knowledge, training, skills and support. Teachers' attitude towards inclusion is negative, based on the many challenges that they are facing in the classroom. There are far too many learners in one classroom for it to be successful. There is too much work to cover in the given timeframe. Parents are not involved in the learning process and expect the teachers to provide support to their child on a daily basis, without providing support at home.**

#### **5.3.4 Findings with regard to research sub-aim three: Realistically implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school**

This study revealed that teachers do make provision for inclusive education in the classrooms by providing lower level activities and individual support, but it is an immense struggle with classrooms that are overcrowded. It involves a lot of planning and resources that are not always easily available. Teachers include various strategies to accommodate learners with barriers to learning, such as: grouping and a buddy system, where a stronger learner is paired with a weaker learner to provide guidance. Lower level activities are included in the lessons to accommodate the learner that struggles with the prescribed workload. Re-teaching a concept to make sure that the concept is understood before moving on to the next concept is also used. Individual support is provided and work for home support is prepared and provided to the parents, but it does not always get done at home, due to lack of parental involvement. Referrals get made to health professionals to further support the learner, if needed. Corrective teaching is done continuously to cater for learners with barriers to learning. With the many

challenges mentioned above it can be understood why it is not always possible to achieve the inclusive aims. Other challenges include limited time, too many learners in one class and a vast curriculum (cf.par.4.4.1.3a). The implementation of inclusive education policies in Gauteng schools are not realistically possible with the given time allocation to complete the workload. Overcrowded classrooms and a rigid curriculum are major factors that hamper the success rate of the inclusive process. The reality is that it is not possible to personalise each lesson and include all the learning styles in overcrowded classrooms (cf.par.4.4.1.3b). With 40-50 learners in one classroom, it is not realistic to support all the needs of all the learners. Behaviour concerns is a major factor that hampers the inclusive process, as most of the time educators need to manage discipline in the classroom, while trying to provide support to learners who need assistance to complete the given tasks (cf.par.4.4.1.3c).

**Finding 3: Inclusive education policies are not realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools. With a class of 40-50 learners, teachers struggle to adapt lessons to cater for each learning style. Although various strategies are in place for supporting learner with barriers to learning, it is time consuming and impossible to do for every lesson.**

#### **5.3.5 Findings with regard to research sub-aim four: The needs of inclusive learners in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng**

According to the study, it was found that teachers need to provide different instructions for different learners, grounded according to their learning style. This is very challenging, especially in an overcrowded setting, as too many instructions will be provided for the same concept. This causes confusion even for the stronger learners (cf.par.4.4.1.4a). The needs of learners are not met, due to lack of training for teachers. Teachers did not attend workshops to better understand the implementation process of inclusive education. If there is not a clear understanding of the inclusive policy expectations, it cannot be expected that teachers know what to do in the classroom regarding inclusion (cf.par.4.4.1.4b). Teachers need to be shown how to provide support to learners in real classroom settings. Teachers do not know how to teach at different levels and with different worksheets for learners based on their work pace, especially with 40-50 learners in one classroom. Teachers are of the opinion that in order to

meet the needs of learners with barriers, the curriculum should be adapted to make provision for support. If teachers need to teach at different levels, more time is needed to cover the content of each subject. The curriculum is too fast paced with an unrealistic timetable to cover the workload. Sometimes there is not enough time to re-teach a concept and this hampers the process of providing appropriate support to learners due to unrealistic curriculum goals (cf.par.4.4.1.4c).

**Finding 4: The needs of learners with barriers to learning are not met in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng. Teachers need skills and training to implement inclusive education successfully in their classrooms. There is a need for changes in public schools in Gauteng in order to meet the needs of learners with barriers to learning. The curriculum should be adapted to make provision for support.**

## **5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY**

### **5.4.1 Introduction**

The main objective of the study was to determine how educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Furthermore, the study highlighted real struggles learners and teachers experience in the classroom every day. The study aimed to establish different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms, the challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom, the realistic implementation of inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms and to establish if the needs of learners are met in overcrowded classrooms. The following recommendations indicate that the researcher has achieved the main objective: To determine how educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng. Addressing these concerns should improve the inclusive education system in Gauteng schools.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendation with regard to research sub-aim one: Different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school**

Research aim one was to determine different ways in which teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms. This study revealed that teachers make use of various strategies in their classrooms, but teachers are not confident to implement the strategies due to being unsure if it is the correct way to provide support to learners with barriers to learning. No guidance has been provided from the Department of Education as to how to support learners with barriers to learning. Teachers did not receive guidance on how to adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of learners (cf.par.4.4.1.b). Teachers are not aware of inclusive policies and this is a major concern, as teachers are expected to implement inclusive policies without being familiar with the policy content (cf.par.4.4.1.c). No training has been provided to promote inclusive education or to equip teachers with skills required to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms, yet it is expected every day. This study revealed that in the same school teachers use different strategies to provide support to learners. There is no consistency on how support must be provided. This could be due to the fact that each child has different needs, making it so much more difficult for the teacher to support 40-50 learners in one classroom. Support work that works for one teacher might not be appropriate in the next classroom due to different needs to accommodate. Teachers are really trying very hard to ensure that learners receive quality education, but it is a daunting task with limited guidance from the Department of Education (cf.par.4.4.1.d).

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** In order for inclusive education to be successful a major change needs to occur in the education system. Teachers need to be made aware of and familiar with inclusive policies and procedures. This can be achieved through workshops presented by the Department of Education to share policy information. Once the content of the policies is understood, practical examples need to be given in real classroom settings through training sessions. Teachers need to be shown and trained on how to provide inclusive education to learners with various learning barriers by using various strategies to include all learners in one lesson in an overcrowded classroom. The training needs to be consistent for each school to get the same information, yet indicate flexibility to suit the needs of each learner. Inclusive



education should be made compulsory with a teaching practise module when studying for an education qualification in order to generate awareness of inclusive education and provide teachers with knowledge, skills and basic understanding on inclusive education, barriers to learning and strategies that may be used to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning. Once teachers are confident and they understand the inclusion policies and implementation process, their attitude towards inclusive education will shift from negative to positive due to gaining knowledge, skills and confidence. Hence, the Department of Education and formal school settings should aim at promoting positive attitudes among teachers during training sessions. A collaborative approach and sharing of skills are needed from teachers, parents, SBST and DBST to provide support to learners. Inclusive education should form part of teachers' language when speaking about their daily learning and teaching experiences.

#### **5.4.3 Recommendation with regard to research sub-aim two: Various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom**

Research aim two was to determine various challenges teachers are facing to implement inclusion policies in the classroom. This study revealed that teachers are facing many challenges, such as: teachers are not sure who is actually responsible for the implementation of inclusive policies (cf.par.4.4.1.2a). Other factors include: overcrowded classrooms, limited time, lack of teacher training and skills to successfully implement inclusive education in the classroom, and lack of knowledge and awareness of inclusive policies. Teachers cannot create a supportive learning environment if they do not have knowledge about what it entails. Limited learning aids and the overwhelming amount of work that must be completed due to a rigid curriculum are also challenges (cf.par.4.4.1.2b). Furthermore, limited support from the DBST is a big challenge for teachers. The DBST is not easy to reach and it is very difficult to follow up on referrals made to the DBST for assistance with school placement (cf.par.4.4.1.2c). Lack of parent involvement and parents are often in denial are further setbacks to the inclusion process. Parents often do not believe that their child needs additional support in order to cope with the demands of a formal school setting, hence they do not support the child at home. If their child is not coping, they also blame the teacher (cf.par.4.4.2.2).

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** Educators and parents need to understand the entire process of inclusive education; awareness must be spread about the responsibilities of each stakeholder.

This can be achieved through information sharing sessions at schools, hosted by the Department of Education. Reducing the number of learners in classrooms will be of great benefit to the inclusive education system. Alternatively, training teachers to teach and support learners in an overcrowded classroom could also be considered. There is a great need to adapt the curriculum to promote differentiation. Teachers need to be trained in a realistic school setting that will highlight the relationship between theory and practice of the inclusive policies. The additional stress and pressure of teachers to perform duties that they have not been trained for hampers the inclusion process as well. Teachers are not confident to provide inclusive education due to lack of knowledge, training, skills and support and their attitude towards inclusion is negative, based on the many challenges that they are facing in the classroom. Lack of parental involvement in the learning process puts additional strain on educators. Parents expect the teachers to provide support to their child on a daily basis, without providing support at home. Parents need to understand and be aware of the advantage of being an involved parent.

#### **5.4.4 Recommendation with regard to research sub-aim three: Realistically implementing inclusive education policies in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school**

Research aim three was to determine if inclusive education policies are realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a Gauteng public school. This study revealed that, although teachers make use of various teaching strategies to include all learners, such as: grouping, a buddy system, lower level activities, re-teaching a concept, individual support, home support, referrals and corrective teaching, it is not always possible to achieve the inclusive targets due to limited time, overcrowded classrooms and a vast curriculum (cf.par.4.4.1.3a). It is not possible to accommodate all the learning styles in overcrowded classrooms of 40-50 learners. Teachers need to plan lessons, plan additional work for various learning styles and provide individual support to learners, but this is a real struggle. Teachers are frustrated and feel that the education system is not only failing their learners, but also our teachers themselves. The expectations are just too high (cf.par.4.4.1.3b).

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Inclusive education policies are not realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in public Gauteng schools. In order for a successful change in the inclusion policy, resources and teaching aids should be easily accessible. This study indicated

that teachers have to differentiate the curriculum without guidance and practical examples on how to achieve it. With a large number of learners in the classroom, teachers have great difficulty to adapt lessons to cater for each learning style. Although various strategies are in place for supporting learners with barriers to learning, it is time consuming and unrealistic. The Department of Education should create a link to their website with age appropriate lessons that include all learning styles. This will share awareness of not only inclusion, but also how to adapt lesson plans to suit the needs of all learners.

#### **5.4.5. Recommendation with regard to research sub-aim four: The needs of inclusive learners in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng**

Research aim four was to determine if the needs of learners are met in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng. According to the study, it was established that it is extremely challenging to meet the needs of learners and provide different instruction according to various learning styles, especially in an overcrowded setting (cf.par.4.4.1.4a). Teachers did not attend workshops to be familiar with the implementation process of inclusive education (cf.par.4.4.1.4b). Teachers need to be shown how to provide support to learners in a real classrooms setting with 40-50 learners, while managing classroom discipline. The curriculum should be adapted to make provision for support. The curriculum is so fast paced that even re-teaching a concept is difficult at times. (cf.par.4.4.1.4c).

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** The main aim of inclusion is to make sure that all learners are able to learn at their own pace and according to their own abilities. There is a need for changes in public schools in Gauteng in order to meet the needs of learners with barriers to learning. The number of learners per class needs to be reduced in order to achieve this goal. The Department of Education needs to ensure that teachers have a support system and familiarise themselves with the inclusion policies. Teachers need skills and training to implement inclusive education successfully in their classrooms. The curriculum should be adapted to make provision for support.

### **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The choice of the objectives was to gain insight into how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning. The research study focused on one school and included teachers in the Foundation Phase (Grade R-3). Although all educators are facing challenges with inclusive

education, time limits restricted a larger population to be researched, especially now that schools were not allowed to have visitors due to the strict Covid-19 protocols that were put in place by the Department of Education.

Due to the COVID-19 protocols that must be adhered to at all times, the concern was that if, due to wearing face masks and maintaining social distancing between participants, the participant did not speak loud enough to be heard properly it would be difficult to decode the content of the interview.

Despite the list of limitations mentioned above, the research findings contributed to a better understanding of the challenges that teachers are facing to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng and provided insight into how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study revealed that educational policies and law do affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng Province. It also revealed that teachers are experiencing real struggles to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms. It is very hard to overcome the challenges without support from the Department of Education. In light of this realisation, further research could be done on exploring the main stakeholders' opinions and understanding of inclusive education. Furthermore, research could be done on the struggle to transfer learners with barriers to learning from mainstream schools to special needs schools, as the process often takes years to occur, if at all. I also recommend that future studies explore the lack of parental involvement to better understand the reasons for lack of support from parents. Lastly, research could be done on methods used to successfully implement inclusive education in mainstream schools for all educators to benefit from these effective methods.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study revealed that educational policies and law do affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng Province. The Gauteng Department of Education needs to address the challenges raised by educators to improve the current inclusive education system. Addressing the concerns will improve the

teaching and learning experience for teachers and learners. The South African education system should provide quality education to all learners, regardless of their abilities. Teachers are desperate for assistance to achieve these goals. Inclusive education can only be successful if teachers have an extensive understanding of how to identify barriers to learning, obtain skills to implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms and plan for diversity with confidence.

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## ANNEXURES

### ANNEXURE A: UNISA Ethical Clearance Certificate



**UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Date: 2020/05/13

Dear Mrs A JANSE VAN VUUREN

**Decision:** Ethics Approval from  
2020/05/13 to 2023/05/13

Ref: **2020/05/13/48332755/12/AM**  
Name: Mrs A JANSE VAN VUUREN  
Student No.: 48332755

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**Researcher(s):** Name: Mrs A JANSE VAN VUUREN  
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**Supervisor(s):** Name: Prof RJ Botha  
E-mail address: botharj@unisa.ac.za  
Telephone: 0824116361

**Title of research:**  
**THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED CLASSROOMS IN GAUTENG**


**Qualification:** MEd Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2020/05/13 to 2023/05/13.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2020/05/13 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



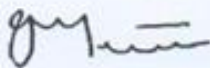
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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2023/05/13**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

**Note:**

*The reference number **2020/05/13/48332755/12/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



**Prof AT Motlhabane**  
**CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC**  
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**Prof PM Sebata**  
**ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN**  
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Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

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Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150  
[www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za)

## **ANNEXURE B: Request to conduct research from the Gauteng Department of Education**



### **Request to conduct research from the Gauteng Department of Education**

#### **THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED GAUTENG CLASSROOMS**

Education Research and Knowledge Management

Department of Education

PO Box 7710,

Johannesburg,

Gauteng

2000

Contact number: 011 355 1510

Dear Education Research and Knowledge Management

I, Adel Janse van Vuuren, am doing research under supervision of Professor RJ Botha, a professor in the Department of Education Leadership and Management towards an MEd at the University of South Africa.

The aim of the study is to determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng Province.

Your department has been selected because I am familiar with the inclusive education structures that have been implemented and they make for an appropriate case study.

The study will entail an approach that is qualitative in nature. The research study will gather qualitative data to assess the personal experiences of educators while also gathering data from survey instruments measuring the quality of inclusive education. A broad spectrum of methods, including semi-structured interviews, group discussion, questionnaires and document analysis, will be used for the purpose of this study.



The benefits of this study will provide educators with possible methods to enhance the implementation of inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng.

There are no potential risks to any of the learners or educators. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. The feedback procedure will entail mentor groups and staff meetings.

Yours sincerely

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Mrs A Janse van Vuuren

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UNISA student number: 48332755

## ANNEXURE C: Gauteng Department of Education Research Approval Letter



### GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

#### GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	01 June 2020
Validity of Research Approval:	04 February 2020 – 30 September 2020 2019/472
Name of Researcher:	Janse Van Vuuren A
Address of Researcher:	116 Clydesdale Rd Cassedale Springs
Telephone Number:	0823592444
Email address:	48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Research Topic:	The effect of policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in gauteng
Type of qualification	Master's in Education
Number and type of schools:	1 primary School
District/s/HO	Gauteng East

#### **Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research**

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1. Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

Making education a societal priority

#### Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0486

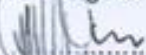
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



Mngumani Mukatuni

Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: .....01 June 2020.....

**Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management**

7<sup>th</sup> Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith.Tshebalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

## **ANNEXURE D: Permission request from school**



### **Request for permission to conduct research**

#### **THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED GAUTENG CLASSROOMS**

Dear Principal

I, Adel Janse van Vuuren, am doing research under the supervision of Professor RJ Botha, a professor in the Department of Education Leadership and Management towards an MEd at the University of South Africa.

The aim of the study is to determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng Province.

Your institution has been selected because I am familiar with the inclusive education structures that have been implemented and they make for an appropriate case study.

The study will entail an approach that is qualitative in nature. The research study will gather qualitative data to assess the personal experiences of educators while also gathering data from survey instruments measuring the quality of inclusive education. A broad spectrum of methods, including semi-structured interviews, group discussion, questionnaires and document analysis, will be used for the purpose of this study.

The benefits of this study will provide educators with possible methods to enhance the implementation of inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng.

There are no potential risks to any of the learners or educators. There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. Feedback procedure will entail mentor groups and staff meetings.

Yours sincerely

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Mrs A Janse van Vuuren

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UNISA student number: 48332755

## **ANNEXURE E: CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ grant consent that the information I share during the focus group may be used by Mrs A Janse van Vuuren for research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's name: (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **ANNEXURE F: LETTER TO RESPONDENTS**

Dear Respondent

This questionnaire forms part of my master's research entitled: The effect of policy and law on inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms, for the degree of MEd at the University of South Africa. You have been selected by a qualitative sampling strategy from the population of your primary school.

The aim of this study is to investigate how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng Province.

The findings of the study may benefit educators to enhance the implementation of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng.

You are kindly requested to complete this survey questionnaire, comprising three sections, as honestly and frankly as possible and according to your personal views and experience. No foreseeable risks are associated with the completion of the questionnaire which is for research purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

You are not required to indicate your name and your anonymity will be ensured; however, indication of your age, gender, occupation position, etcetera will contribute to a more comprehensive analysis. All information obtained from this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you have the right to omit any question if so desired, or to withdraw from answering this survey without penalty at any stage. After the completion of the study, an electronic summary of the findings of the research will be made available to you on request.

Permission to undertake this survey has been granted by the Department of Education and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. If you have any research-related enquiries, they can be addressed directly to me or my supervisor. My contact details are:

Contact number: 082 359 2444,

E-mail: [48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za)

My supervisor can be reached at:

Professor RJ Botha

Department of Education Leadership and Management

College of Education,

UNISA

Contact number: 0824116361

E-mail: Botharj@unisa.ac.za.

By completing the questionnaire, you imply that you have agreed to participate in this research.  
Please return the completed questionnaire to Mrs. A. Janse van Vuuren before 30 June 2020.



## **ANNEXURE G: RESEARCH INFORMATION**

### **DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT**

My name is Adel Janse van Vuuren and I am doing research under the supervision of Professor RJ Botha, a professor in the Department of Education Leadership and Management, towards an M Ed at the University of South Africa.

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

This study is expected to collect important information that could determine how educational policies and law could affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in public schools in Gauteng Province.

### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

You are invited because of your experience with the phenomenon under study. I obtained your contact details from the school principal. The number of participants for this study is four educators.

### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

The participant's actual role in the study would be to participate in a semi-structured interview, a focus group discussion and to complete a questionnaire. The study involves audio taping, a questionnaire, a focus group, a semi-structured interview and document analysis. The questionnaire is attached to this document, as ANNEXURE H. The expected duration of participation and the time needed to complete specific research activities is 30 minutes for the questionnaires, 30 minutes for the focus group and 30 minutes for the interview.

### **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw after submitting the questionnaire, without giving a reason.

### **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

The possible benefit this study will be to provide educators with methods to enhance the implementation of inclusive education in overcrowded public schools in Gauteng. By assisting with your voluntary participation the researcher can use the answers of the questionnaire and the outcomes of the discussions to identify possible methods to improve the implementation of inclusive education. The participants will explore various policies and in turn broaden their knowledge on inclusive education policies and procedures.

### **ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

Time could be a limitation that can hinder the progress of the study. Participants might not have enough time to respond to all the questions due to rigid timetables, but arrangements will be done in advance with the participants to establish the most suitable time to conduct the interviews. Participants' unexpected behaviour or responses during the interview could also hamper the outcome of the study. If the participant does not speak loud enough to be heard properly, it would be difficult to decode the content of the interview. Although all educators are facing challenges with inclusive education, time limits restricted a larger population to be researched.

Despite the limitations mentioned above, the research findings will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges of inclusive education in overcrowded, multicultural public schools and provide insight into how educational policies and law affect teaching and learning. The researcher will protect the identity of participants. The role of the researcher is to ensure that the individuals and institutions are safeguarded; therefore, the signed consent form will be folded and placed in a box prior to completion of interviews, group discussions and questionnaires. The box of consent forms will be placed in the safe room of the school storage area.

### **WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your

involvement in this research (*this measure refers to confidentiality*) **OR** Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give (*this measure refers to anonymity*). Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings (*this measure refers to confidentiality*).

Please note that confidentiality agreements should be submitted to the Research Ethics Review Committee for consideration. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

The group discussion will consist of a small group of four participants and will be in conversational form. The discussions were planned by developing key questions based on the main objective of the research study and will be recorded by using an audio recorder and by taking notes. While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, I cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group.

### **HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the safe room of the selected primary school for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

**WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

Participants will not receive payments or any incentives for participating in this study. Participation is voluntary.

**HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?**

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Education Ethics Committee at UNISA. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

**HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Mrs. A. Janse van Vuuren on 082 359 2444 or email [48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za).

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Mrs. A. Janse van Vuuren on 082 359 2444 or email [48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:48332755@mylife.unisa.ac.za).

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor RJ Botha.

Email address: [Botharj@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Botharj@unisa.ac.za)

Mobile number: 082 411 6361

Fax number: 086 634 4060.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.  
Thank you.

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Mrs A Janse van Vuuren

## ANNEXURE H: QUESTIONNAIRE

### GUIDE FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please answer the questions by making a cross (X) next to the correct answer.
2. Please do not skip any questions. Use “N/A” for not applicable questions.
3. This questionnaire will only take 30 minutes to complete.

### SECTION A: INSTITUTIONAL AND STAFF DATA

1. Please provide the following information:

School Name	
District	
Telephone	
Email	
Address	

2. How old are you?

18-24	
25-35	
36-45	
46-55	
56-65	

3. Indicate your gender.

Male	
Female	

4. Please indicate the grade you are currently teaching.

Grade R	
Grade 1	
Grade 2	
Grade 3	

## SECTION B: CAPACITY, SKILLS AND TRAINING

5. Please indicate your educational level?

Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Honours	
Master's	
Doctorate	

If other, please specify e.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> year student at UNISA.

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6. What is your job title?

Student teacher	
Educator	
Departmental Head	
Deputy Principal	
Principal	

7. How long have you been teaching?

Less than 1 year	
1-3 years	
4-6 years	
7-9 years	
More than 10 years	

### SECTION C: POLICIES AND PROCUDURES

8. What do you think does inclusive education mean?

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9. Do you know of any policies, procedures, norms and standards for inclusive education in your institution?

Yes	
No	

10. Does your institution cater for inclusive education?

Yes	
No	

11. Did you get formal training for inclusive education from the Department of Education?

Yes	
No	

12. Did you attend the SIAS workshop offered by the Department of Education?

Yes	
No	

13. Who do you think is responsible for introducing the implementation of inclusive education?

Teachers	
School Management Team	
School Principal	
Department of Education	

14. How do you find the implementation process of inclusive education?

Easy	
Challenging	
Very challenging	

Please specify:

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15.What do you think can be done to ensure effective implementation of inclusive education?

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16.What challenges are teachers facing to implement inclusion policies in Gauteng classrooms?

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17. How do teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?

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18. Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in a public Gauteng school?

Yes	
No	

Please specify:

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19. Are the needs of learners truly met in an overcrowded classroom in a public school in Gauteng?

Yes	
No	

Please specify:

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20. Would you benefit from attending appropriate workshops on how to successfully implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms?

Yes	
No	

## **ANNEXURE I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Research topic**

THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED  
GAUTENG CLASSROOMS

### **INTRODUCTION**

I am conducting a research study to better understand the question of: How does educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms?

This interview will last for approximately 30 minutes.

The interview will be recorded, and the information that will be gathered during the interview will be used to write a research report that will be used merely for academic purposes.

The research report will not include any names or other information regarding the institution to maintain confidentiality.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. Walk me through a typical day in your classroom.
3. Explain what is your understanding of inclusive education.
4. Are you aware of any policies for inclusive education?
5. In your opinion, whose responsibility is it to make sure that inclusive education policies are being implemented?
6. Did you attend any workshops to better understand the process of inclusive education?
7. Describe how you have used inclusive education in your classroom.

8. Can you give me an example of activities that you differentiated in order to include all learning types?
9. What factors do you think influence the successful implementation of inclusive education?
10. In your experience, what challenges are teachers facing to implement inclusion policies in Gauteng classrooms?
11. How do you think teachers implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?
12. Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng public schools?
13. Do you think that the needs of learners are truly met in overcrowded classrooms in a public school in Gauteng?

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES**

14. In your opinion, would teachers benefit from attending appropriate workshops on how to successfully implement inclusive education in overcrowded classrooms?
15. What do you think can be done to ensure effective implementation of inclusive education?

### **CONCLUSION**

We have reached the end of our interview. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your input will be of great value to the research.

Please note that as soon as the report has been completed, it will be made available to participants on request.

## **ANNEXURE J: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

### **Research topic**

THE EFFECT OF POLICY AND LAW ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OVERCROWDED GAUTENG CLASSROOMS

### **INTRODUCTION**

I am conducting a research study to better understand the question of: How does educational policies and law affect the teaching and learning of inclusive education in overcrowded Gauteng classrooms?

This group discussion will last for approximately 30 minutes.

The discussion will be recorded, and the information that will be gathered during the process will be used to write a research report that will be used merely for academic purposes.

The research report will not include any names or other information regarding the institution to maintain confidentiality.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Today's topic is policy and law on inclusive education. What are your general views about it?
2. How familiar are you with policy and law on inclusive education?
3. What positive experiences have you had with regards to any policy on inclusive education?
4. What are the specific issues, concerns, or problems you have faced with implementing inclusive education in your classroom?
5. Do inclusive policies give practical examples of how to implement inclusive education in an overcrowded classroom successfully?

6. What practical examples do you use in your classroom to ensure that learners' needs are met?
7. In your opinion, do teachers receive adequate practical training regarding inclusive education?
8. Are inclusive education policies realistically implemented in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng public schools?

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES**

9. In your opinion, what factors does the policy on inclusive education, such as the SIAS document, not address in terms of successful implementation in overcrowded classrooms in Gauteng?
10. What changes would you recommend making to the inclusive education policy?

### **CONCLUSION**

We have reached the end of our group discussion. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your input will be of great value to the research.

Please note that as soon as the report has been completed, it will be made available to participants on request.